

**GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN THE CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS**  
**A Preliminary Assessment**

**Prepared for USAID/CAR**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Purpose of the Work**

This preliminary assessment of gender considerations in the Central Asian Republics is intended to assist USAID/CAR in designing a gender strategy which will enable the Mission to achieve projected program results more effectively and efficiently across all three Strategic Assistance Areas: (1) Economic Restructuring, (2) Democratic Transition, and (3) Social Sector Transition.

Because the Mission was giving priority to responding to start-up and transition challenges, there was not sufficient time to also consider how the appropriate integration of gender across the entire portfolio could help the Mission to enhance the impact of its assistance program. This Preliminary Gender Assessment is a first step in doing that. It (1) considers the efficacy of Mission activities to date and (2) formulates recommendations on how gender considerations can be integrated more systematically into Mission programs. The report is a potential road map for future actions, surveying the territory and suggesting routes for the Mission to take.

#### **B. Audience for the Report**

While the principal audience for this report is USAID/CAR, the document is also designed to provide background material for those who may work in the area in the future. This includes such entities as staff from the ENI Bureau, USAID/G/WID, and other USAID/G Technical Centers. Consequently, the report contains material about the region and USAID/CAR's portfolio which will be redundant for Mission staff but which has been incorporated for the benefit of other potential consumers.

### **II. MAJOR FINDINGS**

#### **A. Strategic Assistance Area 1: Economic Restructuring**

SAA 1 has received approximately 60% of the funding in the region, but - in many ways - has received the least attention in regard to integration of gender considerations, except for micro-enterprise projects. The rapid assessment of the Team indicates that women are not only very active in the labor force, they can also be successful players in small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Despite the very real economic burdens of economic restructuring on women, the transition period has also presented women in the region with entrepreneurial opportunities. The success of microenterprise projects working with women beneficiaries, such as that of FINCA in Kyrgyzstan, is well documented. Less well known are the success stories concerning women in small-medium scale enterprises which demonstrate that women can successfully compete in the market economy as

small-medium scale entrepreneurs and, consequently, enterprise projects which include women should not be limited to the micro-sector. Examples from Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund (CAAEF) and International Executive Service Corps (IESC) follow.

### **Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund**

CAAEF promotes the development of private enterprise through two investment mechanisms: (1) the Direct Investment Program, a joint venture mechanism designed for commercially promising medium-sized enterprises; and (2) the Asian Crossroads Loan Company which provides loans to smaller entrepreneurs. Assessment data show that in Kyrgyzstan, 50% of CAAEF joint-venture partners have been women or wife-husband teams in which women play an equal role and 20% of ACLC loan recipients have been the same. In Kazakhstan, 14% of joint venture financing and 25% of ACLC loans have gone to women entrepreneurs. Loans have ranged from \$8,000 to \$111,892.

### **International Executive Service Corps**

IESC accelerates the establishment and growth of private companies in the manufacturing sector through the technical and managerial assistance provided by its volunteers. In 1995-96, IESC served 22 clients which had more than 50 employees, with a total work force of 12,641 women and men. Disaggregating these data by sex presents a picture of an economic sub-sector in which women play important roles as high-level managers, as well as blue-collar and technical employees. For example, among the Kazakstani industries, 81% of employees are women and 64% of the firms have women in either the No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 position. These managers provide a source of human capital whose skills could well promote more economic growth.

## **Discussion**

What these preliminary data demonstrate is that many women in the region are having success in the market economy, and not just as microentrepreneurs. Nonetheless, they are also a population whose skills have not been fully recognized or utilized.

The Assessment Team suggests that by **explicitly** targeting women, as well as men, in strategic and implementation planning, USAID's private enterprise activities will have even more effective results. Conversely, by not expressly including appropriate gender issues, women's opportunities and constraints become unconsciously eliminated from the picture. Even though we may think of our policies and activities as **gender neutral** -- having equal impact on men and women -- many are **gender blind** -- having differential impacts on men and women. This skilled labor force should not be confined to microenterprise.

## **B. Strategic Assistance Area 2: Democratic Transition**

## Introduction

The preponderance of democracy and governance activities related to women are focused on supporting NGOs/PVOs as a means to empower women to advance their interests in the political process. The logic of this approach is sound: as women develop the skills to press more effectively for the political system's attention to gender considerations, the impact will be felt in economic and social policy. In all three countries that the team visited, efforts to strengthen the nascent, indigenous NGO/PVO sector, including those groups involved in promoting issues of particular concern to women, are helping to boost women's participation in the political sphere and enhancing their prospects for influencing the course of public policy. These activities fall primarily under SO 2.1, complemented by the training offered through the NET (NIS Education and Training) Program.

## Women's NGOs

The Assessment Team found a number of women-led NGOs which are either providing essential services for needy segments of society or advocating effectively for policy reform, despite the difficult conditions confronting development of NGOs. (In fact, many interviewees talked about NGO formation as an "opportunity sector" for many women whose previous employment has been eliminated or whose income has been cut back as a result of restructuring.) It also found that even NGOs in the service delivery area become involved in advocacy work, especially at the local level. And, finally, it found that there is little coordination among NGOs, which limits possibilities for disseminating information as well as generating grassroots pressure for reform.

Although enabling conditions in Kyrgyzstan for NGO development are better than in Kazakhstan or Uzbekistan, the impediments to the development of a robust NGO community in all three countries are common to the post-communist world. Among the most salient are: inhospitable enabling environment characterized by both national government and even public suspicion about the role of NGOs; absence of a participatory political culture due to an historically weak or non-existent civil society; shortage of requisite organizational and management skills; poor public outreach and communication strategies; scarce resources and limited potential for tapping domestic sources; and lack of cooperation and inadequate information flow. In addition, NGOs are generally concentrated in the capital cities and have little organizational presence in the regions, making for a narrow support base.

Of the Central Asian states, Kazakhstan probably has the most well-developed NGO sector and the largest number of effective groups working on issues of special concern to women. This appears to be a function of a combination of a comparatively high level of development and the high concentration of U.S. and international organizations in Almaty relative to the other national capitals. One reason for their presence is the plausible assumption that the evolution of Kazakhstan will significantly influence the future direction of its Central Asian neighbors.

Even though the general political and legal-regulatory situation is notably better in Kyrgyzstan than in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, promotion and enforcement of women's rights remains a formidable challenge. A small number of USAID-funded NGOs, concentrated in Bishkek, are engaged in such activities. For example, the Women's Congress of the Kyrgyz Republic is working to combat violence against women, in part through greater public awareness of women's rights.

### **Cross-Cutting Initiative: the NET Program**

Complementing NGO/civil society-strengthening efforts, the NET Program has provided U.S.-based and in-country training for Central Asian participants across the USAID assistance portfolio. This “human capital development” program has set a goal of 40% women participants, thereby expanding opportunities for women to enhance their skills and to network with colleagues from around the NIS and the U.S. Forging these ties is especially important given the all too familiar gulf between the national capital and the rest of the country and the dearth of society-to-society linkages between the former Soviet republics and the Western market democracies.

### **Discussion**

In spite of the many obstacles impeding women's involvement in the political process and their ability to take advantage of opportunities arising from the introduction of a market economy, women are beginning to organize to advance their shared interests. NGOs/PVOs have proven one of the most efficacious vehicles for collective action in this regard. Reflecting a trend evident in other post-communist countries and in other regions of the world, women tend to account for well above 50% of those citizens who are active in these civil society organizations. And unlike the situation in most government institutions or businesses, women frequently occupy leadership positions in the NGO community.

Funding specifically for women's NGOs (i.e., those dealing with issues principally of concern to women) from USAID and other donors has been critical both to the ability of these fledgling organizations to mount programs to effect change and to their attaining a measure of status in the eyes of the national government. The Assessment Team supports these efforts and suggests additional consideration to the following:

- More attention to issues of networking and coordination, both among NGOs and among donors.
- A stronger focus on experience in constituency-building, public education and media outreach.
- Outreach to NGOs outside the capital cities, both in rural areas and smaller cities.

## **III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. Introduction**

This preliminary assessment of gender considerations in the Central Asian Republics was intended to assist USAID/CAR in designing a gender strategy which will enable the Mission to achieve projected program results more effectively and efficiently across all three Strategic Assistance Areas.

More specifically, the assessment was to:

- Survey Mission activities to date and their gender impacts -- positive and negative.
- Formulate recommendations on how gender considerations could be integrated more systematically into Mission programs.

The Team found that, primarily because of the focus on start-up and transition activities, the Mission has not yet developed a gender strategy which cuts across the three SAAs, is unaware of many of the positive impacts of its activities on women, and, in turn, is not identifying the constraints which prevent even more successful results.

With USAID/CAR making the case for a longer-term presence in the region, this is an opportune time to put more emphasis on gender. The Assessment Team suggests that the Mission would both accelerate progress on its SOs and make these results more sustainable by developing a WID strategy which integrates gender considerations into appropriate activities linked with **all** SAAs, not just those connected with microenterprise and NGOs. To do this, the following initial actions are recommended:

- Develop a long-term plan to integrate gender considerations into appropriate strategies, programs, and activities.
- Form a USAID/CAR Gender Working Group.
- Disaggregate program and project beneficiaries by sex.

#### **B. Develop a Long-term Plan to Integrate Gender Considerations into Appropriate Strategies, Programs, and Projects**

A first step in using gender considerations to increase impact and improve results is the development of a long-term gender strategy. Development of the strategy would start with a more in-depth assessment of current and proposed activities and the opportunities for including appropriate gender issues and the generation of concrete recommendations based on these findings. Given budgetary realities, such a strategy should be based on the sensible integration of gender considerations into appropriate existing activities, hence not requiring any additional expenditures. Development of the strategy could be coordinated with G/WID which, most likely, could provide no-cost technical assistance through its WIDSR and WIDTECH projects. Any technical assistance team should work closely with the WID Officer, the Mission Gender Working Group (see below), and the SO Teams.

#### **C. Form a USAID/CAR Gender Working Group**

The current organization of Women In Development activities in the Mission relies very heavily on a single person, the Women In Development Officer. This organizational arrangement not only puts all the responsibility on one person, it also limits the consideration, collection, and dissemination of gender information to a single office. As discussed earlier, the integration of gender considerations across **all** appropriate activities is the best technique for improving results. A Gender Working Group, chaired by the WID Officer and composed of representatives from all three SAAs and from all five countries, can support the Officer in his/her tasks and expand knowledge and responsibility across sectors and countries.

Potential tasks would include:

- Examining the USAID/CAR portfolio from the perspective of each SAA to see how integrating gender considerations would lead to better results and developing a long-term gender strategy.
- Serving as liaison with a range of stakeholders to coordinate activities and facilitate the exchange of information. These would include: other relevant USG entities; other donors, particularly UNDP; U.S. contractors; and NGOs.

#### **D. Disaggregate Program and Project Beneficiaries by Sex**

Disaggregating appropriate reporting data by sex will give the Mission a clearer picture of the relative impacts of selected program and projects on men and women and of the constraints on and opportunities for boosting results. In turn, these data can be used to shape adjustments which will build on opportunities and remove constraints. This reporting need not put onerous requirements on contractors. In fact, as the Assessment Team learned (see Section III.B, for example), many development partners already disaggregate data and others can easily do so.

#### **E. Other Recommendations**

Throughout the report the Assessment Team offers more modest, specific recommendations covering a wide spectrum of issues and topics, from revising a given existing activity in order to integrate gender considerations more systematically to identifying and exploiting cross-sectoral synergies. These recommendations follow from the Team's analysis of the constellation of challenges and opportunities confronting women in Central Asia and of ongoing and possible future efforts by the Mission to broaden and deepen the impact of its overall assistance program by incorporating gender concerns.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Members of the Women in Development Assessment Team would like to express our gratitude to CAR Mission Director Patty Buckles and her dedicated staff in Almaty for helping to bring the idea for this TDY to fruition and for their unwavering support during our stay. Special thanks go to Rabiga Baytokova, Brooke Isham and Marilyn Schmidt for their invaluable assistance and their keen insights into economic, political and social conditions in Central Asia. Members of the various SO teams were also generous with their time and we profited greatly from the collective experience of these development professionals. We also would like to acknowledge the hospitality of USAID Country Coordinators, C.J. Rushin-Bell in Bishkek and David Mandel in Tashkent, and thank them for the opportunity to broaden our scope to include Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, respectively.



## ACRONYMS

ACDI	Agricultural Cooperative Development International
ACLC	Asian Crossroads Loan Company
AIHA	American International Health Alliance
CAAEF	Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund
CAR	Central Asian Republics
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CNFA	Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs
DAI	Development Assistance, Inc.
DAW	United Nation's Division for the Advancement of Women
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ENI	Europe and the New Independent States
FINCA	Foundation for International Community Assistance
FTF	Farmer-to-Farmer Program
GOU	Government of Uzbekistan
ICMA	International City Managers Association
IESC	International Executive Service Corps
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
MMR	Maternal mortality rate
NET	NIS Education and Training Project
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
SAA	Strategic Assistance Area
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SOMARC	Social Marketing of Contraceptives Project
SO	Strategic Objective
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VOCA	Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women In Development

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### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Purpose of the Work

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Because the Mission has given priority to responding to start-up and transition challenges, there has not been sufficient time to consider how the appropriate integration of gender across the entire portfolio could help the Mission to enhance the impact of its assistance program.<sup>1</sup> This Preliminary Gender Assessment is a first step in (1) assessing the efficacy of Mission activities to date and (2) formulating recommendations on how gender considerations can be integrated more systematically into Mission programs. The report is a potential road map for future actions, surveying the territory and suggesting routes for the Mission to take.

It is also noted that the Agency is currently putting into place a *Gender Plan of Action*, which was approved by the Administrator in 1996. One of the points of this Plan concerns the performance rating of foreign service personnel vis-a-vis gender issues. Consequently, addressing appropriate gender considerations may be a professional, as well as a programmatic, issue for Mission staff. The language states:

*Guidance concerning the critical need to address gender issues in development will be issued to the staff and committees that rate the performance of both civil service and foreign service personnel, and to the boards that select foreign service personnel for promotion.*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The current description of USAID/CAR's Women In Development (WID) activities states: *The USAID technical assistance portfolio in Central Asia is focused around three Strategic Assistance Areas (SAA): (1) Market Transition, (2) Democratic Transition, and (3) Social Sector Transition. As a program geared towards countries in transition, the portfolio is not designed to include a WID-specific program nor more long-term WID-style activities, such as girls education, addressed in developing country programs. However, there are many elements which contribute to WID goals and at least partially address WID concerns: [these include such activities as] Social Marketing of Contraceptives (SOMARC); FINCA (Foundation for International Community Assistance); NIS Education and Training (NET); and NGO Development.*

<sup>2</sup> The complete *Gender Plan of Action* is included in the Attachments.

## **B. Audience for this Report**

While the principal audience for this report is USAID/CAR, the document is also designed to provide background material for those, including ENI Bureau personnel, who may work in the area in the future and for such entities as USAID/G/WID and USAID/G technical centers. Consequently, the report contains material about the region and USAID/CAR's portfolio which will be redundant for Mission staff but which has been incorporated for the benefit of these other would-be consumers.

## **C. Scope of Work and Methodology**

In order to rapidly develop a general profile of the range of gender issues related to USAID/CAR's strategies, programs, and projects, and to the prevailing conditions in the region, the Assessment Team interviewed stakeholders from three areas:

- Mission Strategic Objective Teams;
- a sample of contractors which are implementing relevant projects; and
- a cross-section of indigenous NGOs, many of which have received USAID funding.

The Team interviewed close to 100 individuals from more than 50 institutions during its two week stay. In Kazakhstan, these included almost 50% of the USAID contractors working in the Economic Restructuring area, some 40% in Democratic Transition, and 50% of those contractors involved in Social Sector Transition.

Mission SO Teams briefed the Assessment Team on goals and objectives and results to date while USAID implementing partners described relevant activities, achievements, and possible differential impacts of their programs on men and women. NGOs briefed the Team on their respective activities and on opportunities and constraints concerning gender issues in the region. Finally, the Team conducted interviews with other development organizations operating in the region, including UNDP (which has a very active WID program in Central Asia), Peace Corps, and the Soros Foundation, and with independent researchers. In addition to qualitative information gained from interviews, the Assessment Team gathered hard data on a variety of gender-related issues. These sources are listed in the Attachments as *References*.

The fieldwork was carried out between December 2 and 12, 1996, with all three team members carrying out research in Kazakhstan. Herman and Estes conducted a three-day assessment in Kyrgyzstan, while Johnson did the same in Uzbekistan. The names and affiliations of persons interviewed are provided in Attachment B, *Persons Contacted*.

## **D. Organization of the Report**

The report begins with an overview of the region (Chapter II), and includes background material on economic restructuring, the democratic transition, and gender considerations in each country. It also contains an account of a Beijing Conference follow-up meeting held in Bucharest in 1996 and the corresponding commitments made by countries in the region. Chapter III is organized by the Mission's three Strategic Assistance Areas (SAAs), presenting findings from the interviews with implementing partners and other organizations working on gender issues. Chapter IV is devoted to success stories, and Chapter V concludes with recommendations for future actions.

## **II. OVERVIEW OF THE REGION**

### **A. USAID/CAR: A Regional Management Unit**

Like USAID/Caucasus and USAID/West NIS, USAID/CAR is a regional management entity which was established to plan, implement, and monitor a series of bilateral programs in five countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.<sup>3</sup> USAID is represented in all five countries, but it is the Mission in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which has the primary responsibility for planning and management, and interacting with counterparts, contractors, and embassy staff across the region.

This organizational plan is not only more cost effective, it also ensures that best practices and lessons learned in one setting are quickly and easily disseminated to the others. At the same time, the "satellite offices play important roles, ranging from providing country-specific inputs in programming documents to improving donor coordination and facilitating communication among stakeholders, including counterparts, contractors, embassy staff, and regional project officers."<sup>4</sup>

### **B. Introduction to the Central Asian Republics**

This section presents a socio-economic, political, and gender overview of the three countries in which the Assessment was carried out: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. It is included primarily for the benefit of readers unfamiliar with the region.


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<sup>3</sup> This form of regional mission differs from such USAID entities as REDSO and ROCAP, which are service providers to a set of Missions, and from the South African model in which the Mission manages a series of purely regional initiatives which cover a number of countries.

<sup>4</sup> Source: USAID Regional Mission for Central Asia, *Central Asia: Results Review and Resource Request (R4): Overview and Introductory Document*. Almaty, Kazakhstan, April 1996, pp. 2-3.

However, the information on the status of women may be new for many, even those otherwise knowledgeable about Central Asia.

### C. Kazakhstan <sup>5</sup>

Country Profile: Kazakhstan	
<p><b>Area:</b> 1,049,200 sq. mi.</p> <p><b>Capital:</b> Almaty (expected to be moved to Akmola by 2000)</p> <p><b>Population:</b> 17.4 million (July 1995 est.) / 6.2 per sq. km.</p> <p><b>Rural:</b> 41%, <b>Urban:</b> 59% (1994)</p> <p><b>Per Capita Income:</b> \$1,040 (1995)</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> oil, gas, minerals; large area of arable land</p> <p><b>Inflation rates:</b> 1994, 1,160%; 1995, 60%</p> <p><b>Total Fertility Rate:</b> 2.5</p> <p><b>Life expectancy at birth:</b> 68 years; female, 73; male, 64</p> <p><b>Ethnic divisions:</b> Kazakh, 42%; Russian, 37%; Ukrainian, 5%; German 5%; Uzbek, 2%; Tatar, 2%; other, 7%</p> <p><b>Religions:</b> Muslim, 47%; Russian Orthodox, 44%; Protestant, 2%; other, 7%</p> <p><b>Literacy:</b> age 15+: men, 99%; women, 96%</p>	

#### 1. Overview

Five years after achieving independence in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan continues to grapple with the political, economic and social challenges attending the transition toward free-market democracy. To date, the government has taken a number of steps to restructure the economy and has registered some significant successes in achieving macro-economic stabilization. But while the country can claim progress in moving away from Soviet-style central planning, reform of the communist-era political system has bogged down as authoritarian practices and mindsets are proving slow to change. President Nursultan Nazarbayev maneuvered to avoid a scheduled election in 1995 and instead had his term in office extended until 2000 by popular referendum. The constitution, also adopted by popular referendum, concentrates power in the office of the presidency.

A country rich in natural resources, primarily oil, Kazakhstan has made headway in introducing market-related reforms, including privatization of small and medium state-owned firms and implementation of selected elements of a legal and regulatory framework. The country has attracted foreign investment, primarily in the extractive industries, and liberalized trade. But despite these and other successes such as

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Sources for Country Profile data include: United Nations Development Programme, *Directory of Women's Organizations in Central Asia*, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 1996, USAID Country Profiles, USAID/ENI/, October 1996, and The World Bank, *The World Bank Annual Report*, 1996, Washington, DC, 1996.

currency stabilization, fiscal restraint, reduced inflation, and effective supervision of the banking sector, all of which has resulted in a fair degree of macro-economic stability, the vast majority of the population has endured plunging living standards as the economy has contracted and the communist-era social welfare system has disintegrated.

The political situation in Kazakhstan is decidedly mixed. Since independence there has been a marked improvement in respect for individual rights. A nascent independent press now exists and the number of NGOs, including advocacy-oriented groups, continues to grow. But these newly established democratic institutions and practices are fragile. The government has demonstrated strong authoritarian proclivities and freedoms are frequently abridged. Civil society institutions do not yet offer much of a counterweight.

The fledgling NGO sector and independent media are weak, as are opposition political parties, the parliament, and the nominally independent judiciary. Political activity is severely curtailed. Popular participation in the country's political life remains low due to a combination of government action and low level of efficacy on the part of citizens. Centralization of authority has meant little devolution of power to local and regional governments. Tensions between ethnic Russians and Kazaks could also pose serious impediments to the establishment of a vibrant democracy.

## **2. NGO Development and Women's Political Participation**

Kazakhstan's repressive political environment, coming on the heels of decades of communist rule that all but prevented the formation of civil society, continues to retard the emergence of democratic institutions, practices and values. Citizens have little voice in public policy decision making, whether through the ballot box, nascent independent media, political parties not affiliated with the government, or recently-minted NGOs and various types of community groups. While respect for individual rights has increased, and both a free press and NGO sector have emerged (though neither is financially sustainable), the Nazarbayev regime still maintains tight control on political activity. Independent trade unions are not at all strong, and neither the parliament nor the judiciary offer a check on presidential power. With respect to devolution of political power, there has been virtually no delegation of authority to regional or municipal governments --staffed by presidentially-appointed officials-- where the potential for citizen involvement in public affairs is arguably greatest. Meanwhile, corruption is reportedly widespread, further impeding efforts to establish the rule of law.

In post-communist transition countries where the government has little or marginal demonstrable interest in democratic reform, USAID programs frequently concentrate on strengthening the fledgling NGO sector, which offers a mechanism for aggregating interests and a means of generating grassroots pressure for reform of the broader political and legal/ regulatory environment. The WID Assessment Team's scope of work

similarly led it to emphasize the NGO sector in evaluating the impact of Mission programs on women.

In the course of the Team's meetings with an array of political actors, including NGO leaders, it identified a series of shortcomings which are reducing the prospective impact of the NGO sector on the respective countries' political systems. These problems ranged from limited institutional capabilities and lack of expertise with respect to public outreach, constituency building, and media relations, to all too familiar administrative, managerial, financial, and inter-organizational challenges. Moreover, the Government of Kazakhstan, like the rest of its Central Asian counterparts, views NGOs/PVOs not as partners in the development process, for example, in building a democratic polity, but as troublesome opponents who make unwelcome demands on the State. A lack of understanding on the part of the broader citizenry regarding the role of NGOs in a democratic society (a state of affairs due in part to these organizations' failure to engage in public outreach or pursue activities that demonstrably touch people's lives) presents yet another hurdle for the embryonic NGO sector.

USAID/Central Asia recognizes that beyond the barriers facing all Kazakstani citizens seeking to create a democratic society, there are additional formidable obstacles -- political, economic, and cultural-- to women's participation in the country's public life. This situation, in turn, hampers overall progress toward USAID's strategic objectives in the Democracy and Governance sphere, as well as in other strategic assistance areas.

Among the most commonly mentioned impediments to Kazakstani women's involvement in the political process are generally low social status, crushing multiple burdens --child rearing, household management and full-time jobs outside the home (all the more consuming in times of widespread privation)-- discrimination and traditional socio-cultural attitudes that do not countenance a significant role for women in political affairs, low levels of efficacy, and the dearth of essential organizing skills among even the most empowered women. Rising incidence of domestic violence and abuse, a serious social problem that women are either extremely reluctant to discuss or simply accept as normal, should also be viewed as an obstacle to women's political participation.

For a variety of reasons, non-governmental and private voluntary organizations (NGOs and PVOs) provide one of the most efficacious (relatively speaking) avenues for collective action on issues of paramount concern to women. This is not to say that work with political parties, organized labor, or selected government ministries would not be fruitful. A plausible case could be made for programs involving each of these political institutions/actors and activities could be designed to ensure that the interests of women were being advanced, or at least not unwittingly undermined. But despite having to contend with a less than hospitable enabling environment, Kazakhstan's nascent NGO sector shows signs of promise and, not surprisingly, already boasts a number of successful groups headed by women.



As alluded to above, the impediments to the development of a robust NGO community in Kazakhstan are common to the post-communist world. Among the most salient are: inhospitable enabling environment characterized by both national government and even public suspicion about the role of NGOs; absence of a participatory political culture due to an historically weak or non-existent civil society; shortage of requisite organizational and management skills; poor public outreach and communication strategies; scarce resources and limited potential for tapping domestic sources; and lack of cooperation and inadequate information flow. NGOs are also generally concentrated in the capital cities and have little organizational presence in the regions, making for a narrow support base. Women seeking to use NGOs to help further their collective interests face all of these challenges in addition to having to overcome social and cultural obstacles to full participation in the economic and political spheres.

It is important to point out that the Assessment Team was not able to travel around the country and meet with representatives of locally- and regionally-based NGOs, which tend not to enjoy comparable access to foreign donor resources (financial and technical) and often face a different constellation of constraints and opportunities than their counterparts in Almaty. As a result, the Team's general conclusions about the NGO sector and women's participation in public life should be subject to further examination, and perhaps, disaggregation along an urban-rural or small-large city dimension. The potential methodological problem posed by a skewed "sample" was mitigated somewhat by the fact that several U.S. implementors and a few capital-based Kazakstani NGOs/PVOs do have a regional presence and are beginning taking steps to broaden their reach to include smaller cities and rural areas.

Of the five Central Asian states, Kazakhstan probably has the most well-developed NGO sector and the largest number of effective groups working on issues of special concern to women. This appears to be a function of a combination of a comparatively high level of development and a reasonable degree of political space --by Central Asian standards-- permitted by the Nazarbayev government. Another contributing factor to the relative strength of Kazakhstan's NGO sector is the high concentration of U.S. and international organizations in Almaty relative to the other national capitals. One reason for their presence there is the plausible assumption that the evolution of Kazakhstan will significantly influence the future direction of its Central Asian neighbors.

As in both Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, NGOs in Kazakhstan have yet to coalesce into an effective community where individual groups cooperate and collaborate to advance a common agenda. In addition to the familiar spate of shortcomings afflicting fledgling civil society organizations, including those active in promoting the interests and concerns of women, information sharing is particularly poor. This is due more to inadequate networking than to competition among the groups for modest foreign donor resources. But whatever the reason, research documenting the plight of women in the transition and information on best practices/lessons learned are not being disseminated among those who most need and can put it to best use.

### **3. Gender Considerations**

With respect to conditions facing women, as in the other former Soviet republics, women have been hit especially hard by the economic dislocation and social disruption accompanying the move away from central planning and robust system of social benefits. While some highly educated and entrepreneurial women have been able to take advantage of emerging opportunities in the new economic order, rising unemployment, the unraveling of the social safety net, mounting social problems (e.g., domestic violence), and reassertion of traditional political-cultural patterns, confront women with a daunting set of conditions.

The disproportionate adverse impact on women of the transition to a market economy also has been accompanied by divergent political participation trends. On the one hand, the added burden placed on women as a result of deteriorating economic and social circumstances makes it more difficult for them to become involved in the political process. In addition, the number of women serving in the parliament has decreased compared to the Soviet era, a pattern observable across the entire post-communist world. (Given the questionable value of representation in Soviet "legislatures" and scarce evidence that women who did serve did much to advance gender concerns, the significance of fewer female lawmakers is a matter of debate.) On the other hand, the proliferation of non-governmental organizations and advocacy-oriented groups has opened up new avenues for women to participate in the country's political life, albeit in a sector which exerts relatively little influence on public policy decisions. These NGOs and PVOs are a vehicle for aggregating interests and historically have been a training ground for honing political skills.

### **4. USAID's Support**

Although USAID/Central Asia does not have a WID-specific program, it does support a number of activities in the three strategic assistance areas that address women's concerns and contribute to WID goals. The bulk of these activities can be found in SAA II, the Democratic Transition, and even more narrowly, are focused on supporting NGOs/PVOs as means to empower women to advance their interests in the political process. The logic of this approach is sound: as women develop the skills to press more effectively for the political system's attention to gender considerations, the impact will be felt in economic and social policy. In all three countries that the team visited, efforts to strengthen the nascent, indigenous NGO/PVO sector, including those groups involved in promoting issues of particular concern to women, are helping to boost women's participation in the political sphere and enhancing their prospects for influencing the course of public policy.

However, it should also be noted -- as detailed in Section III.B of this report -- that integrating gender considerations into SAA 1 activities will also lead to even more positive results. Specifically including women, as well as men, in appropriate economic restructuring activities is not only good development policy, it is sound economics,

particularly in this region where measures of women's educational levels and labor force experience are very high.

Complementing NGO/civil society-strengthening efforts, the NIS Education and Training (NET) program has provided U.S.-based and in-country training for Central Asian participants across the USAID assistance portfolio. This "human capital development" program has set a goal of 40% women participants, thereby expanding opportunities for women to enhance their skills and to network with colleagues from around their own country, other NIS, and from the U.S. Forging these ties is especially important given the all too familiar gulf between the national capital and the rest of the country and the dearth of society-to-society linkages between the former Soviet republics and the Western market democracies.

The Mission's strategy for addressing gender issues has been to support discrete activities that target women as beneficiaries, whether funding of advocacy groups, training programs, or reproductive health projects. But there is a good deal more USAID/CAR could do to integrate gender considerations more systematically into its **existing** portfolio. This, in turn, would enable the Mission to speed progress in achieving its Strategic Objectives while also enhancing the impact of specific programs targeting women -- without the expenditure of additional resources. Assessment Team recommendations can be found in Section V, *Conclusions and Recommendations*.

## 5. Demographic and Health Data on Women <sup>6</sup>

The most recent demographic and health survey on women in Kazakhstan reveals a number of troubling trends concerning the well-being of the female population, which in turn may affect their ability to participate fully in the country's post-communist economic and political life. The severe deterioration of the Kazakstani health care system is having an adverse impact on all citizens, but women and children may be the most vulnerable. Likewise, rising unemployment and poverty rates will impose particular hardship on "at risk" populations such as pensioners and single parent families, most of which are women.

Access to decent quality pre-natal care has decreased sharply, jeopardizing the health of mothers and infants. The country's economic downturn probably helps account for a drop in fertility rates, although in the poorer, almost exclusively Kazak regions, rates are much higher and access to family planning services correspondingly limited. Although overall abortion rates are declining due to increased availability of alternative methods (e.g., IUD; birth control pills), abortion remains a widely practiced form of birth control, particularly among urban, predominantly ethnic Russian women.


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For more detailed information, see Attachment F, *The Problem of Health in Central Asia*.

More than half the women in Kazakhstan suffer from anemia to some degree. Again, there are notable ethnic and regional differences, with ethnic Russians and women residing in the more developed parts of the country registering appreciably lower rates.

## D. Kyrgyzstan

Country Profile: The Kyrgyz Republic	
<p><b>Area:</b> 76,642 sq. mi.</p> <p><b>Capital:</b> Bishkek</p> <p><b>Population:</b> 4.7 million (July 1995 est.)</p> <p><b>Rural:</b> 61%    <b>Urban:</b> 39%</p> <p><b>Per Capita Income:</b> \$1,160 (1994)</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> hydro; mineral</p> <p><b>Inflation rates:</b> 1994, 87%; 1995, 32%</p> <p><b>Total fertility rate:</b> 3.6</p> <p><b>Life expectancy at birth:</b> 68 years; female, 73; male, 64</p> <p><b>Life Expectancy at birth:</b> 68.3</p> <p><b>Ethnic divisions:</b> Kyrgyz, 52%; Russian, 22%; Uzbek, 13%; Ukrainian, 3%; German, 2%; others, 8%</p> <p><b>Religions:</b> Muslim, 70%; Russian Orthodox, 28%; others, 2%</p> <p><b>Literacy:</b> age 15+: men, 99%; women, 96%</p>	

### 1. Introduction <sup>7</sup>

Kyrgyzstan is a relatively small country of 4.7 million people living in an area about the size of Nebraska. Despite considerable out-migration over the past several years, the country remains ethnically diverse. Ethnic Kyrgyz comprise the majority of the population, but there are sizable communities of Russians, Uzbeks, Germans, Tatars, Uigers, and others. A mountainous country with relatively little fertile land, Kyrgyzstan was one of the least developed of the former Soviet republics. It does have significant hydro and mineral resources which enhance the country's prospects for long-term economic success. However, Kyrgyzstan's geographic isolation, combined with the enormous investment needed to exploit these natural resources makes the short-term economic outlook much more problematic.

On the international front, Kyrgyzstan actively promotes broad regional cooperation, has enthusiastically joined the "Partnership for Peace" program and has made application for entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO).

USAID's assistance program in Kyrgyzstan emphasizes both economic and political reform, reflecting a development hypothesis that the two processes are inextricably

<sup>7</sup>

Sources for introductory, economic, and political sections: *USAID Congressional Presentation FY97* and *USAID/ENI Country Profiles*.

linked, and taking advantage of the Akaev government's manifest commitment to pursue a democratic, free-market course. The largest share of assistance resources is devoted to consolidating the economic transition, though the composition of the program is changing over time. For example, the privatization program is scheduled to wind down this year and no new funds are anticipated. At the same time, work in other areas such as trade, investment, legal and regulatory environment, and land registration is projected to increase.

Democratization programs will increasingly focus on developing the basic foundations for a civil society, in large part through promoting independent media and helping to strengthen nascent NGOs as a vehicle for popular participation in public policy decision making. Social sector programs are tied closely to broader economic restructuring objectives, emphasizing, for example, the necessity of reforming the health care system to ensure sustainable provision of services.

## **2. Economic Restructuring**

Kyrgyzstan inherited one of the least efficient industrial sectors of the former Soviet republics and lacks easily exploitable natural resources. But under the leadership of democratically-elected President Akaev, Kyrgyzstan has been among the earliest and most active reformers among the NIS, establishing the basic framework for a market economy and bringing about a commendable degree of macroeconomic stability. In 1993 it became the first country in Central Asia to introduce its own currency, the *som*. Since then, the *som* has been remarkably stable, maintaining its value against the dollar and other freely tradeable international currencies. Monthly inflation rates have been reduced to manageable low single digits and overall fiscal management has been quite sound. Foreign investment is strongly encouraged and the country's privatization program is regarded as among the most ambitious in the former Soviet Union. Kyrgyzstan is classified as a lesser indebted, lower income country by the World Bank.

Despite progress in achieving macroeconomic stability, the standard of living has fallen dramatically. The fallout from the elimination of subsidies from Moscow was exacerbated by the disruption of existing trading links and the departure of many skilled technical and professional workers to Russia, Germany and elsewhere. The newly independent country's inefficient industrial sector included unproductive defense-related plants and a variety of other industrial enterprises that simply could not compete in the international marketplace.

Perhaps because of its isolation and weak economic situation, Kyrgyzstan moved quickly to introduce economic reform. There are some encouraging signs, especially when economic activity in the informal sector is factored in, that the post-independence recession finally may have bottomed out. The economy is divided roughly equally among the agriculture, industry, and service sectors. According to official statistics, agricultural performance was quite strong in 1995 and overall agricultural output appears to have increased by about eight percent. The continued decline in industrial

output appears to have been cushioned to some extent by a rise in electricity production. Trade patterns continue to be dominated by countries in the former Soviet Union, which still account for well over half of both imports and exports.

USAID-funded advisory groups have played an important role in both the privatization process and in the overall economic restructuring effort. The mass privatization program is now reaching its final stages and should be largely complete by the end of the year. Central Asia's second stock exchange has been established in Bishkek and, despite a modest start, is positioning itself to play an important role in promoting the kind of capital market development needed to ensure that scarce financial resources are directed toward areas of highest economic return. A new tax code is being finalized and should be implemented soon. As the private sector begins to play an increasing role in the economy, more attention is being devoted to ensuring that appropriate legal and administrative structures are in place that promote rather than retard private sector growth. Recent approval for creation of an independent energy regulatory agency is one important example of the type of change needed to improve efficiencies and attract foreign investment. Further changes in the policy and regulatory environment are needed to consolidate and maintain Kyrgyzstan's reputation as a country committed to market reform, encouraging of entrepreneurial talent and hospitable to private investment.

### **3. The Democratic Transition**

Despite some recent backsliding that has indigenous reformers and their international supporters concerned, Kyrgyzstan remains a relatively democratic outpost in the otherwise authoritarian political landscape of Central Asia. Victorious in an election declared "free and fair" by international observers, President Akaev has taken steps to advance civil liberties enshrined in the post-Soviet constitution. He has also promoted a more pluralist society, actively encouraging the formation of social and political organizations. In this hospitable enabling environment, the NGO sector has shown considerable vitality and appears to enjoy widespread support among the citizenry as well as the country's political leadership. A media operating largely free from government interference, lively multi-party political system, functioning parliament, and independent trade unions have all contributed to Kyrgyzstan's progress toward democratic rule.

Demonstrable headway in implementing political reform notwithstanding, Kyrgyzstan is a long way from establishing a sustainable democracy. Democratic institutions ranging from parliament and the judiciary to NGOs and independent trade unions are still quite weak. Political parties remain personality-oriented factions disconnected from the larger body politic. There are very few private radio and TV stations and most publications continue to have ties to the government. There has been almost no devolution of authority to regional and local levels where officials are directly subordinate to the President and few have stood for election. Last year Akaev succeeded in amending the constitution to give greater power to the presidency. The reform process is now

proceeding largely by decree, further eroding the influence and legitimacy of the parliament.

Contributing to the fragility of Kyrgyzstan's democratic institutions is the severe economic disruption in a country already low on the development scale, increased drug trafficking sure to boost crime and corruption, and occasional tensions between the majority Kyrgyz and ethnic Russians who have been leaving the country in large numbers, claiming discrimination but also seeking brighter economic prospects in Russia. Sensitive to this last problem, the government has eased requirements and procedures for obtaining dual citizenship, and has delayed until 2005 full implementation of Kyrgyz as the official state language.

#### **4. Gender Considerations**

##### **a. Women's Socio-Economic Status**

The Kyrgyzstani Government has issued a report which cites a recent survey in which 70% of those sampled believed "that consequences of the economic transformation heavily burden women's shoulders" and that "... women's situation has [been] aggravated in the past years." The report also offered the following information on women's participation in the economy and major constraints on women's employment, non-wage household work, including childcare: <sup>8</sup>

##### **(1) Economic Participation**

Women's participation rates in paid labor are high. For example, women represent 45% of employees in industrial enterprises, 42% of small businesses, and 36% of executives. The following tables give more details.

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<sup>8</sup>

Kyrgyz Republic, National Statistical Committee, *Women of the Kyrgyz Republic, Statistical Book*, Bishkek, 1996. (Publication sponsored by UNDP.)

**Employment by Sector**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Sub-sector</b>	<b>% of Women of All Employed</b>
Industrial enterprises		45
Education, health, financial, information-computing		60
Trade & public catering		44
State, cooperative & public organizations		36
Executive positions		36
	information-computing	65
	communications	58
	cultural institutions	57
	trade & catering, education	52
	health	51
	governmental authorities	29

**Women Entrepreneurs**

<b>Sub-sector</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of Women of All Employed</b>
Small businesses	17,000	42
Cooperatives	14,500	34

**(2) Unemployment**

It appears that, as is true in most other countries of the region, women are suffering higher layoff and unemployment rates than men. The report states that:

*Resulting from liquidation of work placers, the number of unemployed women is growing. Of the officially registered unemployed people, about 60% are women. Particularly critical is the deficit of work places in the regions [outside of the capital], where substantial release is primarily caused by reformation of kolkhoz and closing up of social-cultural institutions.*



### (3) Non-Wage Household Labor

A primary constraint on the full participation of many women in the labor force is the amount of unpaid time they must spend on household responsibilities, including childcare. Although women in the Soviet period also had a “double-day,” the transition period has made the responsibilities even more time consuming because the government programs which took on some of these tasks, particularly free pre-school and after-school programs for working mothers, have been eliminated. Women in the focus groups organized by the Assessment Team invariably mentioned the double-day as a problem, and the Kyrgyz data back it up:

- **Childcare:** The study reports that because of the economic crisis, pre-school and after-school programs must now charge fees, which most working mothers cannot afford. One consequence is that the total number of pre-schools declined by 73% (1,696 to 456) between 1990 and 1995 and the number of after-school programs plummeted by 99% (1,225 to 12) between 1990 and 1995.
- **Non-Wage Household Labor:** Half of the women in the sample reported that they spend 3-4 hours daily on household duties and another 25% spend 6 or more hours. 70% spend at least 6 hours on weekends. The economic issue here is that increased demands on women’s unpaid labor diminish the time and energy available for paid employment.

#### b. Gender and Human Rights Issues<sup>9</sup>

The dramatic drop in family incomes associated with the transition from a Communist to a free market economy has put tremendous pressures on traditional family structure. Alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment, malnutrition, and the breakdown of social support systems have resulted in a rise in abuse of women by their spouses. The Government has been unable to respond adequately to these new needs due to extreme budgetary limitations. Non-governmental organizations, which might be active in a more developed economy, are only in the formative stages and are not able to provide effective support to abused women. Crime, including rape and assault, has increased markedly since independence.

The press sometimes reports violence against women. While no overall statistics are available, one Bishkek hospital reported that in the first 9 months of 1995, 123 women were admitted with injuries sustained in domestic disputes. Normal law enforcement procedures are used in cases of domestic violence. The Government has not established programs to address these issues. The law gives equal status to women, and they are well represented in the work force, professions, and institutions of higher

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<sup>9</sup>

Source: *Kyrgyz Republic Human Rights Practices, 1995*, U.S. Department of State, March 1996.

learning. Women probably have been more affected by unemployment during the economic transition than men. In addition, the Government's failure to pay pensions has disproportionately affected women, since they make up the majority of pensioners. In rural areas, women are still often seen only in the role of homemaker, mother, and wife.

**c. Government of Kyrgyz Republic Commitments<sup>10</sup>**

The Kyrgyz Government made the following commitments to gender considerations at the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995:

- Develop, in cooperation with NGOs, a national program for women's development.
- Establish a mechanism to implement the Platform for Action.
- Create a comprehensive legal basis to achieve gender equality and women's development.


The current status of these commitments was not investigated by the Assessment Team. However, it is recommended that USAID maintain contact with the responsible government and NGOs/PVOs and other groups so that appropriate support can be given to help them fulfill their commitments.

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Source: World Bank, "Best Practice Summary of Government Commitments at Beijing, in *The World Bank Annual Report, 1996*, Washington, DC, 1996.

## E. Uzbekistan

Country Profile: Uzbekistan	
<p><b>Area:</b> 172,700 sq. mi</p> <p><b>Capital:</b> Tashkent</p> <p><b>Population:</b> 22.6 million (July 1994 est.)</p> <p><b>Rural:</b> 60%    <b>Urban:</b> 40%</p> <p><b>Per Capita Income:</b> \$930 (1995)</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> gold (1/3 of FSU production); natural gas (among 10 largest suppliers in world); other natural resources</p> <p><b>Inflation rates:</b> not available</p> <p><b>Total fertility rate:</b> 3.8</p> <p><b>Life expectancy at birth:</b> 69 years; female, 72; male, 65</p> <p><b>Ethnic divisions:</b> Uzbek, 71%; Russian, 8%; Tajik, 5%; Kazakh, 4%</p> <p><b>Religions:</b> Muslim, 88%; Eastern Orthodox, 9%</p> <p><b>Literacy:</b> age 15+: men, 100%; women, 100%</p>	

### 1. Introduction

Uzbekistan is the most populous of the five Central Asian Republics (22 million people), and the third largest former Soviet republic. Strategically located to the south of Russia and north of Iran, it is the only country that borders all four of the other Central Asian Republics. Rich in mineral wealth and with a diverse economic base --agriculture, industry, and energy resources-- the country represents the largest market in Central Asia. Uzbekistan is the world's second largest cotton exporter, following only the U.S. Such resources have attracted major international investment, currently approximating \$1.5-\$2 billion. Turkey, South Korea, Germany, Japan and the U.S., along with Russia, are the largest foreign economic players. U.S. investment ranges from \$150 to \$200 million, with major interests in mining, oil and gas, agricultural machinery, and aerospace. Uzbekistan has purchased significant quantities of wheat, agricultural machinery and aircraft from the U.S.

Uzbekistan has adopted a program of gradual, step-by-step reform in which the state remains dominant. Although inflation, the budget deficit, and consumer subsidies have been sharply cut, privatization has progressed only slowly. Housing and small retail shops were almost completely privatized in 1993-1994, but privatization of medium and large-scale enterprises has barely begun.

## **2. Economic Restructuring**

Social policies developed during the Soviet era are unsustainable and increase the need for a more targeted social safety net and an expansion of market-based approaches to social service delivery. Currently, social expenditures account for around 40 percent of government expenditure. The health system is inefficient and highly centralized. The tightening of monetary and fiscal policy means that wage rates have not kept pace with inflation, while progress in economic restructuring is bound to increase unemployment rates, at least over the short term. The Aral Sea and related environmental disasters such as the excessive use of pesticides in cotton production have a large and adverse effect on Uzbekistan. There is a serious lack of potable water in some regions and health indicators point to serious health problems in some of the worst affected areas.

## **3. The Democratic Transition**

A democratic and economically sound Uzbekistan that plays a positive and constructive role in world affairs is desirable, both for the well-being of the people of Uzbekistan and for maintaining stability in Central Asia. Political power rests almost exclusively with the president; no active opposition is tolerated. At the same time, the government is sensitive to international perceptions about human rights and other issues and, with growing frequency, responds positively to outside pressures for improvements.

Freedom House has rated Uzbekistan as "Not free" during the past 4 years, noting lack of free and fair elections, private share of GDP less than 50%, less than 50% of agriculture privatized, less than one-third of unions that are new. Indicators of political rights and civil liberties have been declining since 1991.

In relation to the other Central Asian Republics, the Human Development Index ranks Uzbekistan midway between the other regional republics, as laid out in the following table.

### Comparative Human Development Indexes (HDI) <sup>11 12</sup>

Country	HDI	World Ranking
Sweden	0.929	10
Russia	0.849	52
Kazakstan	0.798	64
Kyrgyzstan	0.717	89
Uzbekistan	0.706	94
Turkmenistan	0.731	86
Tajikistan	0.643	103

## 4. USAID Strategy

From a USAID perspective, the main goal is to engage reform-minded elements in the Uzbekistan government and assist where possible in putting in place the basic building blocks of a market-oriented economic system. Establishment of these basic structures should in turn facilitate the private trade and investment needed for Uzbekistan to reach its considerable economic potential. Engagement at an international level also means adherence to internationally accepted norms and practices in key areas related to human rights and civil society. Here too, USAID is attempting to play a catalytic role in exposing Uzbek policy makers to a wider world and in suggesting alternative approaches as they shape their own economic and political future.

USAID expects that Uzbekistan will have the institutional and other resources to continue its own transition. Current plans are to phase out Freedom Support Act (FSA) assistance within the next few years.

USAID programs in Uzbekistan have concentrated in several areas, including the Aral Sea initiative; student exchanges and technical training in the United States; health and family planning; and a low key, but important, democracy-promotion effort centered on building civil society through strengthening NGOs. As resources are reduced, targeting of resources will become even more important. The 1997 program will likely include a

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<sup>11</sup> The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index which includes longevity, educational attainment (adult literacy and mean years of schooling), and income (adjusted GDP per capita).

<sup>12</sup> Source: UNDP, *1995 Human Development Report.*, *Uzbekistan.*

special emphasis on fiscal reform, financial sector restructuring, and training. Modest programs in democratization and social sector reform are also envisaged.

## 5. Gender Considerations

The Soviet legacy left women relatively well-positioned with regard to equal status in education, health care, and to a lesser degree in the labor market. However, Uzbekistani women still rank low in development indicators compared to women in the other NIS. According to the 1996 UNDP Report:

*While Uzbekistan women achieved near equality with men participants in education and the formal labor force, they continued to shoulder the responsibility of raising their children and carrying out the vast majority of household duties, in a society which was still traditional in many ways. This created a heavy dual burden for women. Currently there is concern that the transition to a market economy could exacerbate this burden.*<sup>13</sup>

Women throughout the former Soviet Union are facing higher unemployment rates relative to men, loss of social benefits, and declining representation in national legislatures and government agencies. But this trend is particularly prevalent in the more traditional and less developed societies of Central Asia.

## 6. Education

Every girl of school age is provided the opportunity of education. After graduating from secondary school, girls have further access to a system of vocational, specialized secondary and tertiary schools to provide them with a wide choice of careers. However, women's representation in post-secondary education is significantly lower than men's. (See the following table.) According to 1995 data, women comprise only 39% of those enrolled in institutions of higher education, 25% of post-graduate courses, and 12% of Ph.D. candidates.<sup>14</sup> This trend may actually accelerate in coming years. Recently, an elite private (i.e., tuition-paid) university in Tashkent closed its faculty to women applicants in the fields of both international relations and international law. There are no university courses devoted to gender issues. In the future, girl's/women's education could suffer from increased economic pressures, as parents are forced to bear some of the costs for educating their children. Given traditional attitudes, it's likely that boys/men will fare far better, resulting in even fewer women achieving post-secondary education.

### Gender and Education in Uzbekistan<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Source: Source: UNDP, 1995 Human Development Report., Uzbekistan, p. 77.

<sup>14</sup> Source: Source: UNDP, 1995 Human Development Report., Uzbekistan.

<sup>15</sup> Source: Source: UNDP, 1995 Human Development Report., Uzbekistan.

Level of Institution	% Male	% Female
General Educational Schools	51	49
Specialized Secondary Schools	52	48
Higher Education Institutions	61	39
Post-graduate Courses	75	25
Ph.D. Candidates	88	12

## 7. Economic Participation

The law prohibits any direct or indirect discrimination against women's employment, and labor force participation is high (71%). However, as a UNDP Report stated: <sup>16</sup>

*...women tend to be employed in low-skilled and unskilled occupations at the low end of the pay scale, or in skilled positions in low-paying sectors such as education and health. Though they have constituted between 47 and 51% of university graduates in the last years, women hold only 17.5% of high level management positions.*

According to the 1989 census, women account for three-quarters of the country's doctors and nurses and 60% of teachers, while almost one-third of engineers and technicians are women. (See below.) Much manual agricultural labor is done by women; yet despite women's strong presence in the agricultural sector, including farm ownership<sup>17</sup>, women do not figure prominently in farmers' associations, either as members or as leaders.

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<sup>16</sup> Source: Source: UNDP, 1995 Human Development Report., Uzbekistan.

<sup>17</sup> According to Inovat Avezmuratova, Winrock International, Tashkent, between 15 and 20% of farms are owned by women.

**Women Professionals in Uzbekistan**<sup>18</sup>

Professions	% of Women
Doctors and Nurses	76
Teachers	60
Economists	49
Other Professionals	44
Engineers & Technicians	29
Agronomists, Zoo Technicians & Veterinarians	15

Official statistics hold that women account for slightly under half of the registered unemployed. But academics and social sector practitioners believe these figures do not reflect a higher share of hidden unemployment (e.g., chronic salary arrears), effective disincentives for employers to hire women in a privatized economy, and increasing discrimination.

**a. Women as Entrepreneurs**

Women in Uzbekistan and throughout Central Asia also face formidable obstacles in starting their own businesses, even when possessing the requisite skills. First, they must overcome cultural attitudes which do not readily embrace the view of women as entrepreneurs and business owners. Second, the enormous burden of family and household responsibilities placed on the vast majority of women also diminishes the prospects for starting or running a business.

Then there is the problem of access to credit. Collateral is necessary to secure a loan. In most cases, families pool resources in order to meet this requirement. But traditional attitudes render most Uzbekistani families far less likely to risk these assets when it's a woman who wishes to start a business. Even when lending institutions are functioning, women are certain to encounter more hurdles in dealing with loan officers, who are overwhelmingly men. One consequence of all these impediments is that women often feel too discouraged even to begin the process or don't even think of themselves as would-be entrepreneurs.

Women's participation in economic production takes place in the context of little knowledge about their legal rights and poor enforcement when those rights (e.g., employment discrimination) are abridged. This is one of the reasons why helping to

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Source: Source: UNDP, 1995 *Human Development Report*, Uzbekistan.



empower women through increased participation in the political process is so important.

## **8. Women's Rights**

When it accepted membership in the United Nations and the OSCE, Uzbekistan obligated itself to uphold the principles of those organizations, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The Constitution and various other national legislative acts enshrine human rights protections. Uzbekistan has also acceded to the following international human rights-related treaties, almost all of which include language prohibiting discrimination based on gender:

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Convention for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women<sup>19</sup>

Both the Constitution and the 1992 law on citizenship prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, as well as religion, language, and social status. Although sex discrimination is illegal, mechanisms for enforcement are inadequate, and women are insufficiently aware of their rights and insufficiently organized to advocate for them effectively. This lack of awareness, coupled with the growing influence of more conservative strands of Islam does not bode well for issues related to women's rights becoming a priority on the nation's development agenda.

## **9. Political Representation**

The post-Communist transition has seen a dramatic decrease in the number of women represented in Parliament. Before the 1989 elections, due largely to a quota system, women comprised nearly 35% of the Supreme Soviet. At present, only 13 of the 250 deputies in Parliament, or 5%, are female. Women's representation at the local government level has dropped similarly, from almost half in 1985 to just 6.6% in 1994.<sup>20</sup> Few women hold influential policy positions in the executive branch, and those that do have tended to serve in ministries dealing with social issues, such as health and education.

It would not necessarily be accurate to conclude that Central Asian women today have a weaker voice in politics than they did in Soviet times, notwithstanding the drop in formal representation. The birth of civil society has provided new opportunities for women to enter the country's political life, and while NGOs remain quite weak, they are

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<sup>19</sup> Source: CEDAW; ratified in May 1995.

<sup>20</sup> Source: Source: UNDP, *1995 Human Development Report*, *Uzbekistan*.

an effective mechanism for the slow but crucial process of aggregating interests and giving them forceful representation.

**Women Elected to Parliament (1994)** <sup>21</sup>

Year	Total No. of Deputies	Total No. of Women	Women as % of Total
1985	510	183	35
1990	500	47	9
1994	250	15	6

## 10. Reproductive Health <sup>22</sup>

Uzbekistani women bear an average of 3.3 children, and undergo approximately .7 abortions during their lifetimes. The vast majority (88.7%) of women know of contraceptive methods; 51.3% of currently married women are using a modern method, predominately IUDs. Nearly all contraceptive distribution is through the public sector (hospitals, polyclinics, and women's consulting centers).

A major public health problem is that of anemia in both women and children. Sixty percent of women suffer from some degree of anemia (45.3% mild, 14.2% moderate, and 0.9% severe anemia). More than 60% of children were also anemic (34.0% mild; 25.6% moderate; 1.2% severe anemia). No testing to determine environmental factors (such as lead toxicity) or type of anemia was included in the Demographic Health Survey.

## 11. Social Benefits

Throughout the former Soviet Union, a comprehensive system of social benefits assisted women and gave them preferential treatment. The Communist regime provided child allowances, maternity leaves, and retirement pensions which favored women. For example, the retirement age for women remains 55 years while for men it is 60.

A social welfare system which did not target beneficiaries was unlikely to prove sustainable. Grossly underfinanced, the system has all but collapsed, resulting in non-payment of many benefits. Even when the government does pay, inflation has reduced

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<sup>21</sup> Source: Source: UNDP, 1995 *Human Development Report*, *Uzbekistan*.

<sup>22</sup> The first Demographic and Health Survey in Uzbekistan was completed in 1996; the following information is drawn from the preliminary report.

the cash benefits to a pittance. Pensioners, the large majority of whom are women, are in especially difficult circumstances, particularly those who do not have or cannot count on help from, other family members. Female-headed families have also been hard hit.

In the emerging market economy, employers are hiring men disproportionately over women. One reason may be the higher costs incurred in employing women in those cases where employers have to forego a trained worker's services during a lengthy maternity leave or to provide child care facilities (which many state enterprises still do). These are material disincentives for hiring women. Outright discrimination also appears to be a factor in explaining employment patterns. The so-called "glass ceiling" faced by women in the West may be made of concrete in the case of the former Soviet Union and the CAR's even more so.

Reforming the social benefit system to permit the provision of resources/services on a sustainable basis is an important objective of USAID assistance to Central Asia. Targeting benefits to the needy would have the dual advantage of reducing the financial burden on cash-strapped governments while also providing assistance to women (and female-headed households), who are overly represented in the ranks of the socially vulnerable. Attention might also be given to options for boosting employment of women --a highly educated and skilled segment of the workforce-- from positive inducements to employers, to targeted retraining programs and supporting legal remedies to combat job discrimination.

## **12. Traditional Society**

To varying degrees, the countries of Central Asia are traditional societies, and ones where Islam is becoming more of a presence. Throughout the Team's visit, women themselves explained this aspect of their societies, noting that despite the Soviet-imposed veneer of equality, they still labored under the expectation that raising children and managing the home were exclusively the domain of women. Many voiced concern over the growing influence of conservative attitudes toward the role of women, and some, citing recent developments in Afghanistan, expressed fear of spillover effects of Islamic fundamentalism.

Early marriage was cited by women's groups as a particular concern. The legal age for marriage in Uzbekistan is 17 years for women and 18 years for men. But many adolescents marry at 15 to 16 years old, and even earlier in rural areas where choices and access to information are limited. Traditionally, young women must bear a child within the first year of marriage; failure to do so may result in divorce. During the first three to four years of marriage, women often bear two to three children. Mothers-in-law often exert extraordinary influence on new brides in this traditional Islamic society.

In a two focus groups with Uzbekistani and Kazakstani women's NGOs that work with Counterpart, women noted that their "quadruple burden" (homemaker, childcare, employment, and civil society) constrained all of their activities. Women simply cannot

always meet the multiple demands on their time. Particularly in this traditional society, women do not have the time needed for civic activities: evenings are designated "for the family," and women are unable to attend meetings or organize activities during this time.

### **13. The Government of Uzbekistan's Commitments to Gender Issues**

Government of Uzbekistan officials have spoken publicly about the need for government institutions to engage issues related to gender but their level of commitment and will to act is questionable. A Vice-Hakim is in charge of women's issues, but this person has no programming funds and little real power. Significantly, she is the only female in the Cabinet. A National Women's Committee has been formed but thus far has done little. A national delegation was sent to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995), as well as to the 1996 meeting in Bucharest. (See later section.)

At the local level, the national government has a policy that a woman must serve in each local legislative body. In practice, reports from women's groups indicate that these women were often ineffective in these assignments, simply because they lacked the training and skills necessary to put issues forward in a male-dominated and inhospitable structure.

The GOU had worked with the UN and key NGOs to draft an NGO law. As of December 1996, the effort had bogged down. There has been a good deal of legislative and NGO activity surrounding human rights issues, but very little addressing women's rights.

The Assessment Team met with one leading women in the Uzbek government, Guinora Yoldasheva, who also chairs the board of the International Non-governmental Charity Fund for the Healthy Generation. Mrs. Yoldasheva was eager to describe the extensive work of her Fund but maintained that women faced few barriers to full participation in Uzbek society and that the Government was doing all it could to assist them in their efforts for equal representation.

### **14. United Nations Involvement in Gender Issues: UNDP**

At present, UNDP has two representatives working in the country. The first, Dona Abdurazakova, is head of the UNDP unit and participated in one of the three women's round table discussions, this time with women non-governmental leaders. UNDP actively works with women's organizations, helping them to organize themselves and providing some technical assistance with research projects.

A UNDP volunteer with the WID unit, Meryem Aslan, is also quite active in assisting women's organizations in Uzbekistan. After spending more than a year in rural areas,

she is now based in Tashkent. Her first project was to design a women's calendar booklet containing portraits and brief biographical sketches of Uzbek women throughout history. Proceeds from this calendar will help finance a microcredit scheme for women entrepreneurs.

## **F. Central Asian Republics and the Beijing Platform for Action**

Since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the United Nations and associated NGOs have organized several types of follow-on activities to insure that Conference's Platform for Action is implemented. One such activity was held in Romania in September 1996: the *Subregional Conference of Senior Government Experts in Central and Eastern Europe on the Implementation of the Platform for Action adopted by the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing*. Attended by senior experts and NGO representatives from the 21 governments in the region, CAR participants included:

### *Kazakstan*

- Ms. Mina Kajupova, Chairperson, Council on Women and Family Problems under the President of the Republic
- Ms. Gulsum Suleimenova, Women's Union of the Kazakh State National University, Almaty

### *Kyrgyzstan*

- Ms. Abdyldabek-kyzy Janyl, Chairperson, State Commission for Matters of Family and Women
- Ms. Olga Janaeva, President, *Alga* Forum of Women NGOs, Bishkek

### *Tajikistan*

- Ms. Dodchudoeva Bozgul, Deputy Prime Minister, Head of the Republican Union of Women

### *Turkmenistan*

- Ms. Meredova Kurbandul, Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Tashkovuz

### *Uzbekistan*

- Ms. Oynisa Musurmonova, Head of the Department of Women's Affairs, Cabinet of Ministers
- Mr. Victor Schevchuk, Ministry of Labor
- Ms. Tadjikhon Saydinramova, Director, Business Women's Association, Tashkent

The purpose of the Conference was to provide an opportunity for governments, observers, and NGOs to determine national and regional priorities; design appropriate national action plans, policies, and structures in support of implementation in the region; and facilitate cooperation and coordination within and outside of the region. A principal

goal was to bolster participants' skills and knowledge level to enable them to assist in the preparation and implementation of national action plans, thereby having a multiplier effect at the national level.<sup>23</sup>

The Conference adopted a model national action plan and selected eleven regional priority areas:

1. institutionalizing national mechanisms;
2. facilitating equal participation of women in decision-making;
3. improving the economic and labor-market situation of women;
4. improving women's health;
5. eliminating violence against women;
6. reducing the effects of environmental degradation on women, and expanding women's role in environmental management;
7. reducing the social costs of transition;
8. improving the situation of rural women;
9. addressing the effects of armed conflict on women;
10. alleviating women's poverty; and
11. utilizing the mass media to eliminate gender stereotypes and conduct gender training.

### III. STRATEGIC ASSISTANCE AREAS, ACTIVITIES, AND GENDER CONSIDERATIONS

#### A. Introduction

In this chapter, data from interviews with the organizations which implement USAID programs and projects are presented by SAA and SOs.<sup>24</sup> For those unfamiliar with the Mission's strategic framework, these are outlined in the following table.

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<sup>23</sup> The Conference was organized jointly by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women/Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DAW/DPCSD), UNDP/Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS (UNDP/RBEC) and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

The full report on the Conference can be found at the web site:  
<http://www.un.org/dpcsd/daw>

Additional documents of interest are:

SRC/CEE/BP.7	<i>National report of the representative of the Kyrgyz Republic</i>
SRC/CEE/BP.14	<i>The Role of Women in Uzbekistan</i>
SRC/CEE/BP.19	<i>Kazakhstan: Background paper</i>

<sup>24</sup> More detail on the SOs and implementing partners and associated activities is included in the Attachments.

STRATEGIC ASSISTANCE AREAS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF USAID/CAR<sup>25</sup>

STRATEGIC ASSISTANCE AREAS		
<b>SAA 1: Economic Restructuring</b> <b>Goal:</b> Foster the emergence of a competitive, market-oriented economy in which the majority of the economic resources is privately owned and managed.	<b>SAA 2: Democratic Transition</b> <b>Goal:</b> Support the transition to transparent and accountable governance and the empowerment of citizens through democratic political processes.	<b>SAA 3: Social Stabilization: Goal:</b> Respond to humanitarian crises and strengthen the capacity to manage the human dimension of the transition to democracy.
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES		
<b>1.1 Increased transfer of state-owned assets to the private sector:</b> This objective embraces USAID support for the transfer of public enterprises and other state-owned assets (land, housing stock, financial institutions, utilities, etc.) to private ownership and management.	<b>2.1 Increased, better-informed citizens' participation in political and economic decision-making:</b> This objective embraces USAID assistance directed towards strengthening systems of democratic representation and open information, developing an informed citizenry, and organizing citizens' participation through effective advocacy groups. Increased popular participation is intended to produce greater involvement of citizens in the political process, influence on public policy, and oversight of government.	<b>3.1 Reduced human suffering and crisis impact:</b> This objective encompasses actions to address critical humanitarian needs and strengthen organizational capabilities to anticipate, prevent, and manage future crises.
<b>1.2 Increased soundness of fiscal policies and fiscal management practices:</b> This objective seeks to establish a supporting environment for private sector growth and financial market development. It focuses on increasing stability and predictability of prices at low inflationary levels to preserve the real value of earnings; reducing public sector demand for and preemption of financial resources outside market channels; and improving public sector resource allocation, cost-effectiveness, and accountability.	<b>2.2 Legal systems that better support democratic processes and market reforms:</b> This objective seeks to establish the rule of law, protect civil, political, and property rights, and place limits on arbitrary actions by government. Fair, objective, consistent rule of law requires development of an independent judiciary, professional and honest prosecutors, effective legal representation, and well-defined legal procedures which help to ensure uniform and timely enforcement of laws.	<b>3.2 Improved sustainability of social benefits and services:</b> This objective embraces a range of policy initiatives, pilot efforts, and reform programs to redefine government roles at national and local levels in delivery of social services and benefits, make these services compatible with free market principles, introduce private sector concepts and management practices into public provision of services, and create conditions/incentives for an enlarged private sector role in service delivery and financing.

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Source: *The ENI Strategic Framework*, Office of the Assistant Administrator, USAID/ENI, February 15, 1996.

<b>STRATEGIC ASSISTANCE AREAS</b>		
<b>SAA 1: Economic Restructuring</b> <b>Goal:</b> Foster the emergence of a competitive, market-oriented economy in which the majority of the economic resources is privately owned and managed.	<b>SAA 2: Democratic Transition</b> <b>Goal:</b> Support the transition to transparent and accountable governance and the empowerment of citizens through democratic political processes.	<b>SAA 3: Social Stabilization: Goal:</b> Respond to humanitarian crises and strengthen the capacity to manage the human dimension of the transition to democracy.
<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>		
<b>1.3 Accelerated development and growth of private enterprises:</b> This objective embraces the policy reforms, legislation, and regulatory actions necessary to create an enabling environment for private enterprise. It also emphasizes assistance to individual enterprises to improve their productivity, competitiveness, and development of business service institutions that will continue to support the growth of private firms. Firm-level assistance is directed at broad-based improvement of business practices in such areas as planning, management, production, marketing, accounting,	<b>2.3 More effective, responsible, and accountable local government:</b> Improved local governance is at the core of this objective, requiring rationalization of intergovernmental roles and responsibilities, decentralization of authority (including financial authority) to the local level, improved capacity of local government, and improved channels for citizen participation in local government affairs.	<b>3.3 Reduced environmental risks to public health:</b> This objective embraces actions to halt contamination of air, water, and soil; improve waste management practices; and elevate public knowledge leading to greater support for and voluntary compliance with safe environmental standards.
<b>1.4 A more competitive and market-responsive private financial sector:</b> This objective seeks to improve the accessibility of the private sector to a wide array of financial instruments at competitive market-determined rates. It places emphasis on strengthening the efficiency, reliability, and transparency of financial markets.		
<b>1.5 A more economically sound and environmentally sustainable energy system:</b> This objective is focused on achieving greater efficiency in energy production and use; restructuring energy companies into more commercialized, market-based operations; preserving the energy resource base; and reducing energy-related environmental problems.		

## **B. SAA 1: Economic Restructuring**

### **1. Introduction**



This SAA has received approximately 60% of the funding in the region, but - in many ways - has received the least attention in regard to integration of gender considerations, except for micro-enterprise projects. The rapid assessment of the Team indicates that women are not only very active in the labor force, they can also be successful players in small- and medium-enterprises (SMEs). This section gives an initial picture of the opportunities and constraints associated with SAA 1.

## **2. Findings from USAID Implementing Partners**

The Assessment Team interviewed nine USAID Implementing partners associated with SAA 1, approximately 50% of the total. Based on these interviews and documentation provided by them, the following summarizes each partners's activities and the relation of these to gender considerations.

### ***SO1.1: Increased transfer of state-owned assets to the private sector***

#### **Carana Corporation**

Carana's *Small Scale Privatization and Enterprise Support Project* is responsible for supporting the State Property Committee in managing the privatization of small-scale enterprises throughout the country, with a focus on such sectors as fruits and vegetables, transportation, and pharmaceuticals. As a part of its activities, Carana established the Business Development Center, which provides general business support services and capacity building among local professionals and firms to client companies.

Although Carana did not carry out any gender analyses of its activities, nor disaggregate its data by sex, the interviewee stated that "a fair amount" of women managers were among the clients, that almost all of the accountants were women, and that women were among their success stories as effective entrepreneurs. It was also noted that the head of small-scale privatization for the Government of Kazakhstan is a woman. In addition, many of the best national auditing firms are run by women. Finally, approximately 40% of the participants of the "training of trainers" activities were women, almost all of whom have gone on to successful positions in the private sector. The overall conclusion is that, with the elimination of *de facto* constraints, women can be as successful players in the future market economy.

### ***SO1.2: Increased soundness of fiscal policies and fiscal management practices***

No implementing partners interviewed.

### ***SO1.3: Accelerated development and growth of private enterprises***

#### **Agricultural Cooperative Development International (ACDI)**

ACDI works in Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic in Agribanking Development through its Farmer To Farmer Program and in Kazakhstan in Agribusiness Development through the Food Systems Restructuring Project.

*Agribanking:* No formal analysis has been done of gender issues in this sector, but anecdotal evidence suggests:

- Under the former system, when banks were not much more than post offices, 60-70% of bank employees - from senior through junior levels - were women. With privatization - and the higher income and status associated with privatized banks - these numbers are rapidly changing. A “glass ceiling” has emerged, and it is believed that there is a much lower percentage of women in senior management, although women still make up the close to 90% of the lower-middle levels. For example, in the accounting conversion training, women were approximately 50-60% of participants.
- Loans are predominantly to men. Two reasons are:
  - Loans are generally based on “character,” which is often defined by recommendations from friends in high places - where there were and are more men than women. Men also have a more functional financial-business network than women because of their previous positions and because of the way in which perquisites are being delivered in the new system.
  - A borrower can use a building as collateral, but not a flat. It is much more common for a husband to have title to a building than for the wife or for it to be joint property.

*Farmers Associations:* Although women’s knowledge and labor is essential to the success of small-scale private agricultural enterprises, it is generally the husband who represents the household in the private farmers associations.<sup>26</sup> However, two important exceptions are:

- The Osh Farmers Union (Kyrgyzstan), which has received technical assistance in preparation for the management of a \$150,000-minimum revolving credit fund, is composed primarily of women.
- The head of the Kazkalin (Kazakhstan) Farmers Association is a woman.

*Agricultural Joint Ventures:* ACDI has created two joint ventures to date, a dairy and a meat processing enterprise. The dairy enterprise has only men in the “first management tier”; however, women are in the “second tier,” as deputy plant manager, in accounting and finance and in the laboratory. In addition, 40% of

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<sup>26</sup>

Re women and private farmers associations, one interviewee reported that the World Bank is just completing negotiations with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for an integrated project to revitalize the sheep industry, including the development and support of private farmers associations. This will include the development of **women’s** private farmers associations in each area in which the project works.

plant workers are women. The meat processing venture had not yet hired personnel at the time of the interview; however, all members of the board were men, as well as the new director.

### *Conclusion*

A final observation was that more emphasis should be given to women entrepreneurs in the agricultural and other sectors because women are often more reform minded than men, they want systemic change and a democratic society, and they understand the benefits of long-term planning and policy change as opposed to short-term gain.

### **Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund (CAAEF)**

CAAEF works in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan to promote the development of private enterprise through two investment mechanisms: (1) the Direct Investment Program, a joint venture mechanism, designed for commercially promising medium-sized enterprises; and (2) the Asian Crossroads Loan Company (ACLC), which provides loans to smaller entrepreneurs. Its work with women entrepreneurs is one of the surprising success stories of this Assessment. (Surprising because the team did not predict it and because the Fund representatives did not realize the relatively high percentage of women with whom they work until asked by the team to disaggregate their data.)

The results of the data disaggregation show that in Kyrgyzstan, 50% of CAAEF joint-venture partners have been women or wife-husband teams in which women play an equal role and 20% of ACLC loan recipients have been the same. In Kazakhstan, 14% of joint venture financing and 25% of ACLC loans have gone to women entrepreneurs. Loans have ranged from \$8,000 to \$111,892. In addition, 75% (3 of 4) of the banks with which CAAEF Kyrgyzstan works as “partners” are run by women, and in Kazakhstan, one of the four active “partner” banks has a woman vice-chair.

**Small- and Medium-Scale Women Entrepreneurs  
CAAEF Joint Ventures and Loans**

Loan Type	Kazakstan	Kyrgyzstan	Uzbekistan
<b>Joint Venture Financing</b>			
Total Number of Joint Ventures Approved	7	4	11
Number of Enterprises Headed by Woman or Wife & Husband	1	2	0
% of Total Joint Ventures	14%	50%	0%
Amount and/or Range of Venture Financing	\$800,000 investment, which represents 7% of portfolio from \$ standpoint	\$965,000 total to female entrepreneurs; \$2,900,000 total to male entrepreneurs	not applicable
<b>Crossroads Loans</b>			
Total Number of Loans Approved	20	15	27
Number of Enterprises Headed by Woman or Wife & Husband	5	3	2
% of Total Loans	25%	20%	7%
Amount and/or Range of Loans	\$282,000 total to female enterprises, which is 13% of the \$2,085,000 total of approved loans	range of \$11,000 - 63,000 to female entrepreneurs	range of \$8,000-22,220 to female entrepreneurs; average loan size for all is \$55,553

These data indicate that:

- Women can successfully compete in the market economy as small-medium scale entrepreneurs.
- Enterprise projects which include women should not be limited to the micro-sector.

**Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA)**

Affiliated with the Counterpart Consortium, CNFA is working with private farmers' associations in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakstan and Uzbekistan. Any progressive association is eligible to attend workshops in association building and project design as well as submit grant proposals. In addition, in each country, one oblast-level association is chosen to form an alliance with an American Farm Bureau. Once an alliance is formed and project identified, Farm Bureau experts travel to spend 3-8 weeks with their Central Asian counterparts. Each Farm Bureau expert combines training workshops and site visits to develop specific project ideas.

To date, CNFA has given grants, as well as training in institutional development -  
 - including the development of boards of directors and committees of members -  
 - to ten associations in the region. In four (40%) of these:

- Women were added to the boards as a result of the training.
- Women's committees which work on gender issues were created at the oblast- and rayon-levels.

### **Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA)**

The successful work of FINCA with women borrowers in Kyrgyzstan is well-documented, including the fact that of the 1,716 loans generated as of March 1996, 79% went to women. In addition, all its groups are headed by women. FINCA does not disaggregate repayment rates by sex, but the anecdotal evidence suggests that women have a better record than men. (Although it should also be pointed out that with a repayment rate of 99%, this is a moot point.)

One caveat of this Assessment is that micro-entrepreneurs do not an economy make. Microenterprise projects are an important - and necessary - part of USAID's portfolio in all regions of the world; however, relegating the participation of women in the national economy to microenterprise marginalizes them in a sector which is limited in profit and opportunities for real growth. It is also not sound economics to shunt off 50% of the educated and skilled labor force to the micro-sector.

### **International Executive Service Corps (IESC)**

IESC supports the development of the private sector in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan by accelerating the establishment and growth of private companies through the technical and managerial assistance provided by its volunteers. It focuses on the manufacturing sector, working in several oblasts of each country, not just in the capital city.

In 1995-96, IESC served 22 clients which had more than 50 employees, with a total work force of 12,641 women and men. Disaggregating these data by sex presents a picture of an economic sub-sector in which women play important roles as high-level managers, as well as blue-collar and technical employees. For example, among the Kazakstani industries, 81% of employees are women and 64% of the firms have women in either the No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 position. In Uzbekistan, 40% of the firms have women in either the No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 position. It is important to note that IESC did not seek out firms with women as employees or as managers. In fact, the information on the percentage of high-level managers only emerged in disaggregating the data for the Assessment Team.

The following table presents information on IESC's industrial clients from 1995-96 and their employees.

**Women as Industrial Managers & Employees: Blue-Collar, Technicians, and Managers  
in Firms with More than 50 Employees  
International Executive Service Corp, 1995-96**

Industrial Client	Kazakstan	Kyrgyzstan	Uzbekistan <sup>27</sup>
No. of Industrial Clients	14	3	5
Total No. of Employees of All Clients	8,480	3,247	914
Average No. of Employees per Client	606	1,082	183
No. of Male Employees	1,615	1,917	660
% of Total Employees Who Are Men	19%	59%	72%
No. of Female Employees	6,865	1,330	254
% of Total Employees Who Are Women	81%	41%	28%
% of All Employees Who Are Women in Blue-Collar Positions	69%	32%	11%
% of All Employees Who Are Women in Technical Positions	8%	7%	13%
% of All Employees Who Are Women in Management Positions	5%	2%	3%
No. of Firms Which Have Women in No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 Management Position	9	0	2
% of Firms Which Have Women in No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 Management Position	64%	0%	40%

**Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA)  
Kazakstan Community Loan Fund (KCLF)**

The KCLF is a non-governmental organization which improves the "conditions for commerce" in Kazakstan communities. The program is a locally-managed, accessible, micro-credit initiative which provides training and resources to disadvantaged small business owners through peer group methodology. It targets women and the poor. Through credit, networking opportunities, and business education, owners of small enterprises gain a chance to succeed. The generated income stays within the community, leading to economic improvement. The first training for the enterprise agents has been completed and financial control and

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<sup>27</sup>

IESC has worked with 6 firms in Uzbekistan, but the data on one firm are incomplete so only those of 5 firms is given.

accounting systems are almost in place. The first loans will be administered in April 1996.

A survey of potential creditors carried out by VOCA shows that a majority of female entrepreneurs are highly educated but have moved into petty trade in order to support the family. Respondents indicated that even \$100 loans at commercial banking interest rates would cause their business "to flourish"; however, obtaining credit through formal financial institutions has remained a major obstacle to the growth of their businesses.

### **Farmer-to- Farmer**

The Farmer to Farmer program provides support to the emerging private agriculture sector in Kazakhstan by assisting private farmers and agribusinesses, cooperatives, and farmer associations to adapt to a market economy. Approximately 20% of direct and indirect beneficiaries are women. Few women (less than 5%) participate as leaders in the private farmers associations.

### **Winrock International**

Winrock's Farmer-to-Farmer (FTF) program has operated in the region since 1991 and currently operates in all five republics. It has four major goals: (1) helping farms and agribusinesses enhance food production, distribution, and marketing; (2) shaping a climate that supports economic growth while protecting natural resources; (3) enhancing democratic processes and business practices; and (4) encouraging the equitable participation of women. Winrock disaggregates its data by sex, and the results show that 36% of beneficiaries between 1993 and March 1997 are women. The following table breaks out this by country.

**Women in Privatizing Agriculture**  
**Beneficiaries of the Winrock Farmer-to-Farmer Program (1993 - March 1997)**

Country	Total of Beneficiaries	Women	% of Total	Men	% of Total
Kazakhstan	6,075	2,257	37%	3,818	63%
Kyrgyzstan	12,731	4,389	34%	8,342	66%
Uzbekistan	7,563	2,632	35%	4,931	65%
TOTALS	26,369	9,278	35%	17,091	65%

The Uzbekistan FTF program currently has a 4 person team (2 men and 2 women) in country working with the Uzbekistan Women's Business Association and Mercy Corps to help start several regional women's associations. Winrock's

FTF program is providing technical assistance in credit management and small business skills, and Mercy Corps will provide loans and grants to qualified participants. The potential beneficiaries could exceed 700 women and their families.

#### **SO1.4: A more competitive and market-responsive private financial sector**

##### **Development Assistance, Inc. (DAI)**

DAI's *Pension Reform* projects in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan focus on the reform of the country's social security system and the development of private pensions through the introduction of a private pension law.<sup>28</sup> Although gender issues were not a specific focus of the project, they obviously are embedded in the problems of reform.

Among other considerations in Kazakhstan:

- Women's retirement age was raised from 55 years to 58 in 1996; men's from 60 to 63. The proposal is to raise it one year each year between now and 2001, with some discussion of making the retirement age for men and women equal. But this may be very difficult politically.
- Some special pension privileges have been reduced, including *Heroine Mothers* (which was based upon number of children).
- According to a consultant's report, "...21.7% of all men less than 60 years of age continue to work while receiving their pensions. Similarly, 12.7% of women in the age group of less than 55 years continue to work while in pension status."<sup>29</sup>

In Uzbekistan, approximately twice the number of women as men currently receive retirement benefits. The interview highlighted the critical need for data (demographic projections and economic forecasts), as well as the importance of assessing gender implications of revised policies before they are put into place.

#### **SO1.5: A more economically sound and environmentally sustainable energy system**

No implementing partners interviewed.

### **3. Discussion of the Findings**

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<sup>28</sup> In Kazakhstan, DAI's pension project is linked with SO3.2 (*Kazakhstan Program Overview*, USAID/CAR, November 15, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> Source: Pierce, Donald, *Low Retirement Ages, Special Early Retirement Privileges and Working Pensioners--Burdens on the National Pension System of Kazakhstan*, Report prepared for DAI Pension Reform Project, April 19, 1996.



What these preliminary data demonstrate is that many women in the region, without much proactive outreach on the part of the Mission or implementing partners, are having success in the market economy, and not just as micro-entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, they are also a population whose skills have not been fully recognized or utilized.

The Assessment Team suggests that, by specifically targeting women as well as men in appropriate economic restructuring activities, USAID/CAR could achieve even more positive results in fostering a competitive, market-oriented economy. Integrating gender considerations into SAA 1 activities is sound economics and good development policy, particularly in this region where the measures of women's educational levels and labor force experience are very high.<sup>30</sup> This skilled labor force should not be confined to micro-enterprise in the Mission's strategy.

However, it is also essential to take into consideration those factors which act as constraints to women's full participation. These are briefly described below:

#### a. Gender Neutrality vs. Gender Blindness

- Are USAID strategies, programs and projects gender neutral?

Although policies, programs, and projects are often thought of as **gender neutral** -- that is, having equal impact on men and women -- many are, in fact, **gender blind** -- having differential impacts on men and men.

For example, pension reform may well have very different impacts on women than on men. As a World Bank working paper points out:

*Pension reforms have revealed a number of gender issues with respect to age of retirement and pension schemes. The region [NIS] is characterized by a potentially vulnerable group of pensioners living alone - mainly women (70% of the population over 65); gender differentiated retirement age (frequently 55 years for women, 50 years for men); and large differences in life expectancies, with female life expectancy 10 years greater than male. Women's contributions to the pension system have tended to be lower, given their earlier retirement age, their lower wage levels, and in some cases, their lower levels of labor force participation. Policy choices regarding the extent to which pensions should be based on past contributions to the system or on a flat benefit, and whether*

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For example, a recent NET (NIS Exchanges and Training) Project report notes that of the 490 women from the NIS trained in economic restructuring courses during the past two years, 54% (265 individuals) were from Central Asia. They took courses such as Capital Market Development, Municipal Finance, Customs Automation, and Public Financial Management.

*gender-based life expectancy tables should be allowed, will have very different impacts on women and men.*

### **b. Gender-based Asymmetries in Access to Resources**

- Do women and men have equal access to resources (economic and social) in the new economy? Or have socio-economic factors, and their associated policies, shifted opportunities?
- If there are increasing inequities, what are they and how can they be addressed?
- Are women getting poorer than men? If so, what strategies can modify this trend?

In order for women to compete successfully in the new economy, they must have equal access to resources, such as credit or land. With the privatization of almost all enterprises, including agricultural, it is useful to ask if there is a gender bias in the distribution of these resources. If so, how does this affect women's abilities to maneuver effectively in the market economy; for example, in obtaining credit?

The same World Bank report described above discusses farm privatization and the possibilities for inequities. Many of the comments are relevant to the CAR.

*Most countries have moved forward with their farm privatization programs. In the process of privatization, each farm member was allocated a share of the former state farm land, as well as a share of the non-land assets. Land shares appear to have been allocated equitably among the eligible rural populations, while non-land shares were allocated to farm employees and pensioners based on a combination of years on the job and wage levels. Thus, men's shares of non-land assets have typically been higher because of their longer work history and higher wages. [In addition], while women make substantial asset and labor contributions to their household's private farms, the farms are almost always registered in male family members' names, which may impede women's access to credit and create problems in the even of divorce.*

### **c. Unemployment and Training**

- Is restructuring having unequal employment impact on men and women?
- Are training programs ensuring that women and men are receiving training which leads to equal opportunities for employment and long-term gains in the labor market?

There is emerging, though hardly definitive, cross-country evidence that - in the NIS in general - downsizing and restructuring may be harder economically on women than on men, leading to possible structural unemployment among women. The preliminary

evidence of the Assessment Team indicates that this may also be true in Central Asia.<sup>31</sup> Obviously, more data are needed to see if this is true and, if it is, to design strategies which respond to the issue.<sup>32</sup> In addition, it is important to ensure that women have equal access to entrepreneurship and other labor-market training programs which lead to employment that is equal to men's in professional opportunity and income.

## **C. SAA 2: Democratic Transition**

### **1. Introduction**

Democracy and Governance activities have received a relatively modest share of overall USG assistance resources in Central Asian. With the exception of Kyrgyzstan, the authoritarian orientation and dubious commitment to democratic reform of these countries have generally precluded substantial investments in programs targeting government institutions. This inhospitable enabling environment combined with structural and constitutional impediments to the emergence of judicial independence and parliamentary authority has led USAID to emphasize strengthening fledgling civil society, primarily through support for NGOs/PVOs and independent media. Mission efforts to empower women and ensure their participation in political and economic decision making at the national and sub-national levels have focused largely on support for women's NGOs. These activities fall almost exclusively under SO 2.1 or Special Initiatives/Cross-Cutting Initiatives for various training and exchanges.

### ***SO2.1: Increased, better-informed citizens' participation in political and economic decision-making***

#### **1. Introduction and General Findings**

##### **• Kazakhstan**

In spite of the many obstacles impeding women's involvement in the political process and their ability to take advantage of opportunities arising from the introduction of a market economy, women are beginning to organize to advance their shared interests. NGOs/PVOs have proven one of the most efficacious vehicles for collective action in this regard.

Reflecting a trend evident in other post-communist countries and in other regions of the world, women tend to account for well above 50% of those citizens who are active in

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<sup>31</sup> For example, see the Kyrgyz report cited in Chapter II.

<sup>32</sup> Some have noted that unemployment may hit women and their families harder in NIS transition countries than in European countries, where social assistance programs function better, or in much less developed countries, where informal social assistance networks may provide more support.

these civil society organizations in Kazakhstan. And unlike the situation in almost all government institutions or businesses, women frequently occupy leadership positions in the NGO community.

Support specifically for women's NGOs (i.e., those dealing with issues principally of concern to women) from USAID, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors, and from Western institutions such as the Soros Foundation, have been critical both to the ability of these fledgling organizations to mount programs to effect change and to their attaining a measure of status in the eyes of the national government. Foreign donor funding has also contributed to the emergence of an identifiable and promising women's NGO sub-sector. It has also helped these groups to network with one another and with counterparts from around the region and in the West.

The number of NGOs, including those run by and involved with issues of particular concern to women, has been steadily increasing. Some of the more organizationally advanced groups have begun to make their presence felt, though their effectiveness continues to be lessened by limited experience in constituency-building, public education and media outreach. This segment of the NGO/PVO community also suffers from a thin presence in the regions. The vast majority of groups are clustered in Almaty, where they are involved largely in advocacy/policy work, and have few ties to other cities or to the rural areas. However, there is ample recognition of the problem both by donors and the NGO sector itself, and a shared sense of the enormous potential for organizing at the community level.

USAID's exchange and training (NET) programs have contributed significantly to the growing technical competence and sophistication of many NGO activists, enabling their respective organizations to do a better job of representing constituency interests and participating more effectively in the broad policy-making process. Overseas and in-country training has also allowed politically involved Kazakstani women to form links with like-minded colleagues throughout the region and in the West. The training has been designed to support USAID/Central Asia strategic objectives, including those in the democracy sphere. AED, which implements the NET program, intends to focus increased attention on the local level with the aim of boosting grassroots political participation.

Gender awareness has not been incorporated into NET programs. However, some NGOs which have benefitted from this training are involved in promoting women's legal rights and economic opportunities and raising corresponding policy issues. As far as the composition of trainees, AED reports that only about one-third of participants CAR-wide have been women, below last year's target of 40% and considerably lower than the 50% mandate for this year. Part of the problem has been that much of the training in countries such as Kazakhstan is directed at government ministry personnel, where few women are employed in technical or decision making positions. Another factor in the relatively low figures for women is the mixed record of contractors in identifying female training program candidates.

The USAID-funded Counterpart Foundation is one of the largest sources of support -- grants and training-- for NGOs in Kazakhstan. While Counterpart has not made a systematic effort to fund women's groups, a number of them have been recipients of grants and technical assistance, including a businesswomen's association and a national organization of disabled women. A newly-founded organization of single mothers recently received a generous contribution from Chevron (which raises the issue of charitable donations from the international business community and, more importantly in the long-run, indigenous philanthropy). An association of Kazakstani women's groups is being formed and is working with Counterpart to cement a partnership with the National Organization for Women. The Foundation has also played a role in bringing NGOs/PVOs together through national conferences and training programs (increasingly using previously trained indigenous groups). One such conference, co-funded with the American Legal Consortium and the Eurasia Foundation, brought together women entrepreneurs from around Central Asia.

Along with Counterpart, the Eurasia Foundation is an important grant making institution in Central Asia and has a demonstrated commitment to empowering women through its various programs, of which support for NGOs is only one.

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), using USAID funds, is implementing a number of training and related programs aimed at empowering citizens to get involved in the political process. At conferences and seminars around the country, attendees learn about various strategies for boosting civic participation and also have a chance to meet with other citizen-activists from across Kazakhstan. About 40% of the participants at these gatherings are women, many of whom are leaders or highly active members of NGOs and PVOs. One of the novel approaches employed by IFES is to bring together local government officials and NGO leaders to discuss local solutions to common problems.

A number of foreign donors besides USAID have contributed to strengthening the sub-sector of advocacy and policy-oriented organizations dealing with issues of greatest concern to women. The Soros Foundation's Third Sector Initiative provides small grants to a number of these NGOs/PVOs. Three other Soros initiatives, a legal reform program, a civic education project, and a local government support program, all of which are just getting started, have the potential to encourage women's participation in the political process depending on how they are designed and implemented.

To varying degrees, the European Union, the United Nations Development Fund and some bilateral donors, have undertaken projects aimed at empowering women to participate more effectively in economic and political decision making. Coordination and collaboration among the international donors could certainly be improved and it would help if they could devise a common strategy for improving the status of women, through a range of political, economic, and social programs.

During its stay in Kazakhstan, the Assessment Team, with the help of the Mission and some USAID implementors, was fortunate enough to convene a modified "focus group" -- a wide-ranging, facilitated discussion attended by representatives from several of the more prominent women's NGOs (e.g., Kazakhstan Business Women's Association, Association of Independent Trade Unions, International Ecological Association). The session elicited a number of interesting insights and some useful information.

Beyond the spate of challenges confronting all NGOs in Kazakhstan, women's groups face additional hurdles, not least of which is the undue multiple burden placed on women --as wage earners, child rearers, and homemakers-- that reduces the likelihood of their participation in political life. The availability of child care for working mothers has declined markedly as facilities once run by state enterprises are now closing down. The resource-strapped government has done little to remedy the situation and generally has provided no leadership on gender-related issues.

Repeated attempts to get meeting participants to address the issue of domestic violence revealed a deep reluctance to discuss this serious social problem. Privately, a number of the women acknowledged that domestic violence was commonplace but for cultural and other reasons, it is not talked about openly and very few women's NGOs have programs in place to combat it. (The same is true for family planning and sex education at a time when the rate of sexually transmitted diseases [STDs] is rising significantly.) There are virtually no shelters where victims of domestic violence can go to find security and to receive necessary medical attention and/or counseling. In general, women have little knowledge of their legal rights, although it is questionable whether authorities are prepared to enforce violations of the law, given that practices such as discrimination (e.g., in employment) and domestic violence are so common.

The NGO representatives also lamented that the media has not focused on issues of concern to women or to the activities of organizations engaged in such work. They did not appear to recognize that the NGOs/PVOs are partly responsible for this state of affairs because the groups have not undertaken systematic public and media outreach efforts and that lagging progress in constituency-building makes it less likely they will attract media attention.

The collapse of the health care system and the adverse consequences for the physical well-being of children is a major concern. The women at the meeting expressed the view that there was a direct link between many of the health problems afflicting children and adults alike and the legacy of environmental degradation.

The steady decline in the quality of education is another grave issue raised by many of our interlocutors, but especially by women. Seeing a solid education as the best chance for achieving prosperity in the new, free-market economy, these women are understandably worried by what they view as the rapid erosion of educational standards.

The women also cited a trend which in the West has been termed the "feminization of poverty." With women facing various types of employment discrimination (e.g., first fired; inability to secure seed capital for start-up businesses) and with women comprising the bulk of pensioners and single parent families -- socially vulnerable populations -- women are faring especially poorly in the painful transition to a market economy.

- **Kyrgyzstan**

Notwithstanding continuing obstacles to their full participation in the emerging market economy and democratic political system, the women of Kyrgyzstan have made important strides. Working largely through NGOs, PVOs and a variety of community and civic groups, Kyrgyzstani women have taken advantage of a comparatively supportive enabling environment and modest funding from foreign donors to organize politically in order to ensure issues of concern to women are placed on the national policy agenda and to launch an array of self-help projects.

At the same time, like their counterparts elsewhere in Central Asia, those NGOs active in women's issues often lack the analytical and research capability necessary to participate effectively in and to influence the course of policy deliberations. The problem of inadequate technical expertise is compounded by marginal success of these groups in enlarging their base of support, so that they would have the requisite political clout to compel decision makers to take their concerns into account.

The task is admittedly more daunting in an underdeveloped country like Kyrgyzstan because of the enormous differences between the capital and major cities on the one hand, and the rural areas on the other. Those differences are reflected in the orientation of civil society groups located in Bishkek and the outlook of those disappointingly few indigenous NGOs/PVOs based in or at least having some presence in the regions. The urban-rural dichotomy is becoming more pronounced as resource-constrained national governments can no longer subsidize poorer regions. Moreover, the modicum of prosperity that has resulted from the tentative move toward a market economy has been confined largely to the capital and other leading cities, and even there, only to a narrow segment of the population. This trend makes it all the more imperative that citizens in the formerly communist countries in Europe and the NIS organize at the grassroots level, to work together to mobilize community resources in order to solve common problems.

And as far as the status of women is concerned, there is every reason to think that in Central Asia's rural areas, women bear an even greater share of the burden of the transition away from Soviet-era central planning and womb-to-tomb welfare system. Women in the regions do not enjoy the same high education rates as urban women and have fewer opportunities relative to men compared to their city-dwelling counterparts. The plight of women in the outlying regions of Kyrgyzstan could take a turn for the

worse due to spillover effects from the victory of conservative Islamic forces in Afghanistan. At least this is a fear in the minds of many of the women we met with.

Although the Team did not travel outside of Bishkek, it was clear from meetings with grantees, contractors and other knowledgeable actors that there is a great need to form and develop NGOs/PVOs around the country, particularly in the rural areas where women's needs and concerns can differ appreciably from those of their urban counterparts. In addition to stepped-up efforts to provide seed grants and training for fledgling groups in the regions, careful thought should be given in the design of USAID's planned municipal government program on how to boost citizen, and especially women's, involvement in local decision making. There is a tremendous opportunity here to work with local officials to encourage greater participation, whether through the budget process and/or ongoing dialogue between grassroots organizations and the government on meeting community needs.

Mission and other funders should also consider convening seminars or conferences that bring together the leaders of Bishkek-based women's NGOs with women activists working in the regions, and preferably hold the gatherings in smaller cities (e.g., Osh, Karakol). This would help give the former group a better sense of the needs and concerns of rural women and, hopefully, facilitate closer ties and a stronger, more effective sub-sector of women's NGOs and community organizations. The grant provided by the Eurasia Foundation to the Women's Congress of the Kyrgyz Republic to support a two-day seminar on "Women in a Transitional Society" and subsequent publication of a brochure outlining some of the main themes covered at the conference is a good example of what can be done.

Once again, the NIS Exchanges and Training (NET) project is proving to be an essential complement to other USAID-funded work under this strategic objective. These programs provide intensive training for women involved in various dimensions of the country's political as well as economic system, from advocacy and business entrepreneurship to service delivery. With respect to NGO development, training enhances both individual human and social capital, permitting seed grants to blossom into an effective non-government sector.

- **Uzbekistan**

### **Women's NGOs and USAID Implementing Partners**

Uzbek officials have been relatively receptive to a program that focuses on NGOs as a basic building block of civil society. As in all post-Soviet countries, indigenous efforts at organizational capacity are in their infancy with all NGOs. The fabric of the NGO community in Uzbekistan is woven mainly by women's groups: approximately 80% of NGOs in Uzbekistan have women as leaders.



The vast array of women's organizations, which typically have a small number of members and are loosely organized, deal with such diverse topics as support for parents of diabetic children to home care for the elderly. Many worthy endeavors by some of these groups have been funded by Mercy Corps. Organizations such as Counterpart, the Democracy Network Project (NET), and the Eurasia Foundation provide training for these nascent NGOs, helping to build their capacity for organizational development and providing them with an important forum for exchanging ideas and information.

In Uzbekistan, the Team met with the Counterpart Consortium, the NET Project, and the Eurasia Foundation. Focus groups of women's NGOs were convened by Counterpart and the NET Project, and a third focus group of women leaders was convened by USAID. In addition to these interviews, two key women's NGOs were also visited separately, the Association of Businesswomen of Uzbekistan and the Women's Resource Center. Their work is also described below.

### **Counterpart Consortium**

The Counterpart Consortium is a member of an active NGO Resource Center and provides training, publishes a newsletter, and facilitates NGO networking. Through December 1995, the Consortium awarded 13 grants totaling \$80,000 to NGOs and trained members of 77 NGOs in Uzbekistan. It has also begun to transfer a training capacity to several local NGOs.

Because more women than men comprise the NGO sector, Counterpart has sent more women than men on training courses in NGO leadership and business training. Counterpart has now organized weekly meetings of 12 women NGO leaders. From the brief trip to Tashkent, it was clear that Counterpart offered tangible services to develop the capacity of these nascent women's NGOs, and have dedicated their project to ensuring the greatest possible success of these groups. Counterpart organized a round-table discussion with several women's NGOs during the TDY to discuss their work and constraints they faced in the democratic transition.

### **Eurasia Foundation**

Headquartered in Tashkent, the Eurasia Foundation's small grants program has been a catalyst in helping to organize the NGO community in Uzbekistan. It supports a wide range of activities aimed at furthering economic and democratic reforms in the NIS, and makes awards on the basis of proposals from NGOs. Since April 1995, it has awarded \$1.5 million in small grants per year, for a total of approximately 175 grants, 14 of which directly deal with gender issues (less than 10%) (Appendix 1). The total funding for these 14 grants is \$146,905. Eurasia also conducts other programs. Some of these, such as training (i.e., a small business center), include at least 50% women as beneficiaries.

Eurasia has also financed the Businesswomen's Association (\$23,730), which they deem a true success story, and the Women's Resource Center (\$4,000).

### **Association of Businesswomen of Uzbekistan**

*Tadbirkor Ayol* is a unique NGO that aims to promote the development of business activities of women entrepreneurs. It has collective and individual membership and has united more than 3,000 women in business. It is financed from the membership fees and voluntary donations of more than 14 enterprises and individual members, and has received grants from Eurasia and Mercy Corps. Regional branches function in 10 regions of Uzbekistan and in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. The Association is linked with many multilateral donors, as well as with Counterpart Consortium.

The following companies make up the core of the Association:

- *Tadbirkor Ayol* International trading & marketing
- *Zumrad* Cultural activities, advertising, travel
- *Khimoya* Legal consultancy
- Three O-s Psychological aid & rehabilitation
- *Salsabil* Tourism
- Dreams Dress-making, tailoring, fashion
- *Imcon-Presta* Public relations, employment services

In addition to providing a network for women entrepreneurs, the Association has helped implement many technical assistance projects in the areas of small and medium business development, business incubators, women in development, and accountancy reform. The Association currently seems to attract women from the higher socioeconomic strata, yet in the long term anticipates outreach to women with lower income.

### **The Women's Resource Center**

In operation since 1993, the Center compiles information on women's issues in Uzbekistan. Founded by two women who have authored texts on the status of women in Uzbekistan, it publishes a bimonthly newsletter which it disseminates in Russian (50 copies), Uzbekistani (100 copies), and English (20 copies). The Women's Resource Center forms an important link with Tashkent NGOs, both registered and unregistered, and maintains a database of other NGOs in the region.

In addition to compiling and sharing information, the Center carries out specific educational activities. For example, a grant from Mercy Corps funded an educational program entitled "Women's Rights are Human Rights", which provided 10 sessions for students in rural areas. The Projects also affords a meeting place for young girls, offering educational

sessions on such topics as the family, health, and women in the West. Cognizant of the importance of including men in gender issues, the Center is offering a proposal competition on "women and rights" for boys.

## **2. Domestic Violence**

An issue which often remains below the surface, domestic violence has been reported to be increasing in Kazakhstan (as in most of the former Soviet Union). Although little documentation is available on the nature and extent of the problem, the 1996 Department of State Human Rights Watch states:

*According to human rights groups, there is considerable domestic violence against women. Police are often reluctant to intervene in cases of spousal abuse, considering it to be the family's business, unless they believe that the abuse is life threatening. The maximum sentence for wife beating is 3 years, but few cases are prosecuted. The Government has not specifically addressed the problem. Law enforcement authorities reported 1,905 cases of rape and adjusted 1995 figures to report 1,641 cases. The punishment for rape can range from 4 to 15 years. There is very little coverage of rape in the press, and it is generally believed that rapes often go unreported (p. 997).*

## **3. Findings from USAID Implementing Partners**

### **SO2.2: Legal systems that better support democratic processes and market reforms**

#### **1. Introduction and Findings from USAID Implementing Partners**

- Kazakhstan**

The nominal legal equality attained by women during the Soviet period is proving to be a weak foundation on which to build a system of legal protections and enforcement. Whether in the employment/commercial sphere or the area of social and sexual crimes (rape, domestic violence), women do not receive equal treatment under the law. In addition to funding a number of NGOs engaged in advocacy and public education on women's rights (e.g., Women Lawyers Association and the Feminist League, which is attempting to work with Parliament), USAID also supports the American Bar Association resident advisor program which in Kazakhstan is involved in such activities as analyzing legislation, strengthening existing bar associations and developing new ones, and working with attorneys to improve continuing legal education. Some effort has been made to examine proposed legislation from the perspective of advancing women's rights and to provide informal technical support to women attorneys. There are also formal USAID-funded (through ARD Checchi) training programs for professionals working in the judicial system.

While ABA/CEELI's work on rule of law focuses on democracy and political rights, USAID-implementor IRIS (University of Maryland) is active on the civil and commercial law side. It does not appear that the possible differentiated impacts of these laws and associated regulations has received much attention.

With the preponderance of political power resting with the president (as provided for in the constitution) rather than with parliament and with questionable political will at the center for pressing ahead with reform, there are limits to what can be accomplished in the area of legal and regulatory reform. Judicial independence and effectiveness is also lacking.

- **Kyrgyzstan**

In Kyrgyzstan, the general political and legal-regulatory situation is notably better than in Kazakhstan, but promotion and enforcement of women's rights remains a formidable challenge. A small number of USAID-funded NGOs, concentrated in Bishkek, are engaged in such activities. For example, the Women's Congress of the Kyrgyz Republic is working to combat violence against women, in part through greater public awareness of women's rights, and has organized conferences and seminars, including the previously-mentioned one funded by the Eurasia Foundation. Ukuk ("Law") International Legal Collaboration Fund (see Section IV, "Success stories") has provided expert analysis of various pieces of legislation, some of which deals with issues related to women's rights. An organization of women judges and women members of the Kyrgyzstan Bar Association is also attempting to ensure that women receive equal treatment under the law. They are focusing their efforts on reform of the legal system and on increasing awareness of these issues both by women and the broader public.

#### **D. SAA 3: Social Stabilization**<sup>33</sup>

##### **1. Findings from USAID Implementing Partners**

#### **SO 3.2: Improved Sustainability of Social Benefits and Services**

##### **Abt Associates, Inc.**

Through Abt's Health Care Financing and Pharmacy Privatization Project, USAID continues to assist in the restructuring and the privatization of *Pharmatsya* (the state pharmaceutical monopoly), with the goal of lowering prices, improving quality, and increasing the availability of essential drugs. Nearly half the pharmacies in Kazakhstan are now owned and/or managed by the private sector. USAID technical assistance and training provided in cost accounting and a new hospital payment system is the framework for the Presidential decree to

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For a detailed discussion of women's health issues in the region, see Attachment F, *The Problem of Health in Central Asia*.

establish health insurance. The Mission also supports training for new retail pharmacists and advice on establishing a revolving drug fund.

### **American International Health Alliance**

Two AIHA medical partnerships have provided training and technical assistance since 1993, which have resulted in a revised and expanded curriculum for advanced nursing practice that has been implemented in Almaty Medical College and 12 additional medical colleges throughout Kazakhstan. The general areas of partnership focus have been physician training in specialty areas, establishment of programs in toxicology, perinatology and respiratory disease, infection control, nursing education, emergency medical services, and health care administration and management reform.

### **Center for Disease Control (CDC)**

A PASA with CDC has been in place since 1995 to strengthen and improve surveillance systems. Diseases which are monitored include acute respiratory infection, chronic diarrheal disease, tuberculosis, and sexually-transmitted diseases. The program links with the BASICS project (USAID/W G/PHN). The surveillance program has helped to eliminate a costly, inefficient and outdated tuberculosis detection program for children. In addition, revised immunization policies and schedules have begun.

### **The Futures Group (Uzbekistan)**

The Futures Group's Social Marketing of Contraceptives Project (SOMARC), The Red Apple Media Campaign, promotes and directly supports the development of a commercial market for pharmaceutical products in general and specifically modern contraceptives. Included with commercial marketing activities is a large training component in consumer-based service delivery and contraceptive technology. This innovative effort (which may be the first such donor effort anywhere that does not involve the contribution of donor-funded contraceptive products, but looks instead to private commercial companies for supply) reported a 76% increase in the sale of contraceptives through private pharmacies since September, 1995. Prior to the Red Apple launch, one distributor provided contraceptives to only 20 pharmacies in Tashkent City and Oblast; as of FY96, it supplied 200 outlets throughout Uzbekistan.

Encompassing both family planning and privatization, the Red Apple Media Campaign (known by the red apple label on modern contraceptives available in pharmacies) is based on the premise that women have the right to choose which method of family planning they wish to use, and have the right to obtain this method. Thus, family planning should offer a wide array of affordable and accessible services to each client. Marketing strategies include education messages on television (four times per week), regular sound bites on radio (three channels), and coverage in three newspapers. These messages are intended to dispel myths and inform the public about where they can receive

these products at an affordable price. No prescription is needed for these methods.

To date, SOMARC has conducted two training seminars for physicians and pharmacists (candidates for training are recommended by the Ministry of Health). These seminars are designed to provide information that will help dispel myths around the issue of family planning (such as weight gain and amenorrhea associated with hormonal methods, infertility due to accumulation, facial hair, etc.). These myths are often being told to clients by physicians, based on evidence of 30 years ago.

### **International City Managers Association (ICMA)**

To help the people of Kazakhstan achieve affordable housing, ICMA advocates accurate metering of municipal utilities and subsequent fee increases to provide city revenue for municipal utilities and other city services, such as housing allowances. In addition, the technical assistance program has been extremely successful in passing initial legislation to enable the development of a private sector and completing mortgage, registration, land, and condominium laws. At least 200 condominium associations have been established across Kazakhstan as a result of this work.

Reports from both women's NGOs and USAID contractors working on this issue claim that women are often disproportionately affected by the housing crisis, as utility prices are no longer subsidized and inflation erodes wages and pensions. Many women report that the condominium associations may fail to equally address women's needs for housing. Depending on who controls these associations, women may be disproportionately excluded from benefits.

## **E. Human Resources Development**

### **The NIS Education and Training (NET) Project**

The NET Project has sent hundreds of men and women from the CAR's to the U.S. for short-term training covering a variety of areas, including human rights advocacy and democratic institution building, business associations, environmental risk assessment, and NGO leadership development. Through these and complementary in-country training programs, the NET Project has bolstered participants' administrative, technical and analytical skills essential for more effective representation of group interests and active involvement in the political process. The training programs have also helped to facilitate linkages among program graduates within Central Asia as well as ties with U.S. counterparts.

## **IV. SUCCESS STORIES**

### **A. Economic Restructuring**

Despite the very real economic burdens of economic restructuring on women, the transition period has also presented women in the region with entrepreneurial opportunities. The success of microenterprise projects working with women beneficiaries, such as that of FINCA in Kyrgyzstan, is well documented. Less well known are the success stories concerning women in small/medium scale enterprises; in this case, Central Asian American Enterprise Fund and International Executive Service Corps activities. The field research uncovered data which were not even known to the implementors until they disaggregated their data for us.

#### **Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund (CAAEF)**

CAAEF works in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan to promote the development of private enterprise through two investment mechanisms: (1) the Direct Investment Program a joint venture mechanism, designed for commercially promising medium-sized enterprises; and (2) the Asian Crossroads Loan Company (ACLC) which provides loans to smaller entrepreneurs.

The results of the data disaggregation show that in Kyrgyzstan, 50% of CAAEF joint-venture partners have been women or wife-husband teams in which women play an equal role and 20% of ACLC loan recipients have been the same. In Kazakhstan, 14% of joint venture financing and 25% of ACLC loans have gone to women entrepreneurs. Loans have ranged from \$8,000 to \$111,892. In addition, 75% (3 of 4) of the banks with which CAAEF Kyrgyzstan works as “partners” are run by women, and in Kazakhstan, one of the four active “partner” banks has a woman vice-chair.

These data indicate that:

- Women can successfully compete in the market economy as small-medium scale entrepreneurs.
- Enterprise projects which include women should not be limited to the micro-sector.

#### **International Executive Service Corps (IESC)**

IESC supports the development of the private sector in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan by accelerating the establishment and growth of private companies through the technical and managerial assistance provided by its volunteers. It focuses on the manufacturing sector, working in several oblasts of each country.

In 1995-96, IESC served 22 clients which had more than 50 employees, with a total work force of 12,641 women and men. Disaggregating these data by sex presents a picture of an economic sub-sector in which women play important

roles as high-level managers, as well as blue-collar and technical employees. For example, among the Kazakstani industries, 81% of employees are women and 64% of the firms have women in either the No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 position. In Uzbekistan, 40% of the firms have women in either the No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 position. It is important to note that IESC did not seek out firms with women as employees or as managers.

## **B. Democratic Transition**

Despite the extremely difficult conditions confronting women who are organizing to gain a voice in economic and political decision making, the Assessment Team encountered a number of inspiring instances of women-led NGOs which are either providing essential services for needy segments of society or advocating effectively for policy reform.

Perhaps the most impressive case of success in influencing public policy is that of Ukuk ("Law") International Legal Collaboration Fund in Bishkek. Founded and run by a dynamic, politically well-connected and savvy women, Ms. Mirgul Smanalieva, Ukuk has had a demonstrable impact in helping to shape the content of various pieces of legislation. Specifically, Ukuk, with small grants from USAID, provided expert commentary on the draft NGO law and proposed laws "On Administrative Responsibilities" in discussions with both the Executive Branch and the Parliament. At the same time, thanks to the Director's entrepreneurial efforts at for-profit legal consulting, the Fund has made considerable progress toward financial sustainability -- a rarity for NGOs in the former Soviet Union.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. Introduction**

This preliminary assessment of gender considerations in the Central Asian Republics was intended to assist USAID/CAR in designing a gender strategy which will enable the Mission to achieve projected program results more effectively and efficiently across all three Strategic Assistance Areas: (1) Economic Restructuring, (2) Democratic Transition, and (3) Social Sector Transition.

More specifically, the assessment was to:

- survey Mission activities to date and their gender impacts -- positive and negative -- and
- formulate recommendations on how gender considerations could be integrated more systematically into Mission programs.

The Team found that, primarily because of the focus on start-up and transition activities, the Mission has not yet developed a gender strategy which cuts across the



three SAAs, is unaware of many of the positive impacts of its activities on women, and, in turn, is not considering some of the constraints which prevent more successful results.

With USAID/CAR making the case for a longer-term presence in the region, this is an opportune time to put more emphasis on gender. The Assessment Team suggests that the Mission would both accelerate progress on its SOs and make these results more sustainable by developing a WID strategy which integrates gender considerations into appropriate activities linked with **all** SAAs, not just those connected with microenterprise and NGOs. To do this, the following initial actions are recommended:

- Develop a long-term plan to integrate gender considerations into appropriate strategies, programs, and activities.
- Form a USAID/CAR Gender Working Group.
- Disaggregate program and project beneficiaries by sex.

#### **B. Develop a Long-term Plan to Integrate Gender Considerations into Appropriate Strategies, Programs, and Projects**

A first step in using gender considerations to increase impact and improve results is the development of a long-term gender strategy. Development of the strategy would start with a more in-depth assessment of current and proposed activities and the opportunities for including appropriate gender issues and the generation of concrete recommendations based on these findings. Given budgetary realities, such a strategy should be based on the sensible integration of gender considerations into appropriate existing activities, hence not requiring any additional expenditures. Development of the strategy could be coordinated with G/WID which, most likely, could provide no-cost technical assistance through its WIDSR and WIDTECH projects. Any technical assistance team should work closely with the WID Officer, the Mission Gender Working Group (see below), and the SO Teams.

#### **C. Form a USAID/CAR Gender Working Group**

The current organization of Women In Development activities in the Mission relies very heavily on a single person, the Women In Development Officer. This organizational arrangement not only puts all the responsibility on one person, it also limits the consideration, collection, and dissemination of gender information to a single office. As discussed earlier, the integration of gender considerations across **all** appropriate activities is the best technique for improving results. A Gender Working Group, chaired by the WID Officer and composed of representatives from all three SAAs and from all five countries, can support the Officer in his/her tasks and expand knowledge and responsibility across sectors and countries.

Potential tasks would include:

- Examining the USAID/CAR portfolio from the perspective of each SAA to see how integrating gender considerations would lead to better results and developing a long-term gender strategy.
- Serving as liaison with a range of stakeholders to coordinate activities and facilitate the exchange of information. These would include: other relevant USG entities; other donors, particularly UNDP; U.S. contractors; and NGOs.

#### **D. Disaggregate Program and Project Beneficiaries by Sex**

Disaggregating appropriate reporting data by sex will give the Mission a clearer picture of the relative impacts of selected program and projects on men and women and of the constraints on and opportunities for boosting results. In turn, these data can be used to shape adjustments which will build on opportunities and remove constraints. This reporting need not put onerous requirements on contractors. In fact, as the Assessment Team learned (see Section III.B, for example), many development partners already disaggregate data<sup>34</sup> and others can easily do so<sup>35</sup>.

#### **E. Other Recommendations**

Throughout the report the Assessment Team offers more modest, specific recommendations covering a wide spectrum of issues and topics, from revising a given existing activity in order to integrate gender considerations more systematically to identifying and exploiting cross-sectoral synergies. These recommendations follow from the Team's analysis of the constellation of challenges and opportunities confronting women in Central Asia and of ongoing and possible future efforts by the Mission to broaden and deepen the impact of its overall assistance program by incorporating gender concerns.

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<sup>34</sup> For example, the NET Project, Farmer-To-Farmer, and Counterpart.

<sup>35</sup> For example, CAAEF and IESC.

## ATTACHMENTS

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## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Scope of Work**

#### **USAID/CAR Preliminary Gender Assessment December 1- 14, 1996**

##### **I. BACKGROUND**

The current description of USAID/CAR's Women In Development (WID) activities states: *The USAID technical assistance portfolio in Central Asia is focused around three Strategic Assistance Areas (SAA): (1) Market Transition, (2) Democratic Transition, and (3) Social Sector Transition. As a program geared towards countries in transition, the portfolio is not designed to include a WID-specific program nor more long-term WID-style activities, such as girls education, addressed in developing country programs. However, there are many elements which contribute to WID goals and at least partially address WID concerns: [these include such activities as] Social Marketing of Contraceptives (SOMARC); FINCA (Foundation for International Community Assistance); NIS Education and Training (NET); and NGO Development.*

Because of the emphasis of the Mission in responding to transition and start-up issues, there has not been the time to consider how the appropriate integration of gender in the SAAs could help the Mission achieve even more positive results from its activities. This proposed Preliminary Gender Assessment is a first step in (1) assessing the activities of the Mission to date and (2) recommending efficient and effective ways in which gender can be better integrated into the Mission portfolio. It will include assessing region-wide policies, as well as country-specific activities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

##### **II. STATEMENT OF WORK**

The team will conduct an initial assessment of the Mission portfolio which will:

- P examine all three Strategic Assistance Areas and provide a comprehensive list of Mission activities that impact on women;
- P briefly describe the nature of the impacts found, both quantitatively and qualitatively;
- P document success stories found, using both quantitative and qualitative descriptors when available;
- P provide initial recommendations on revising the Mission WID description cited above;
- P provide initial recommendations on efficient steps to take to better integrate gender issues into the portfolio; and
- P if time permits, report on the work of other donors carrying out gender programs and projects in the region.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

As a part of carrying out the assessment, the team should interview the following and collect any related information:

- P members of the Mission's three SAA teams;
- P a sample of USAID contractors which are implementing the projects associated with the SAAs;
- P a sample of NGOs which are receiving USAID funding; and
- P if time permits, other donors or international organizations which have gender-related programs and projects.

### **IV. DELIVERABLES**

A Draft Report will be submitted to the Mission in WordPerfect 5.1 format. A Final Report will be submitted within ten days after receiving Mission comments on the Draft.

### **V. TIMING, LEVEL OF EFFORT, AND REPORTING**

The team will carry out its work in the region between December 2 and December 13, with the team dividing up to carry out research in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and Tashkent, Uzbekistan, during that time. International travel to and from Almaty will take place before and after those dates. The team will report to Brooke Isham, USAID/CAR/PPS, the Mission WID Officer.

### **VI. TEAM MEMBERS**

- P Team Leader, Robert Herman, Ph.D., ENI/PCS/PS, Social Science Analyst & Bureau WID Coordinator
- P Cate Johnson, Ph.D., G/WID, G/WID ENI Team Leader
- P Valerie Estes, Ph.D., G/WID ENI Analyst, WIDSR Project (Women In Development Strategies & Resources)

## ATTACHMENT B

### Persons Contacted

#### KAZAKSTAN

##### USAID

- Mr. Jonathan Addleton, Program Officer
- Mr. Robert Alexander, Health & Humanitarian Assistant, Office of Social Transition
- Ms. Linda Andrews, Health & Population Officer, Office of Social Transition
- Ms. Rabiga Baytokova, Program Office
- Ms. Jatinder Cheema, General Development Officer, Office of Social Transition
- Ms. Brooke Isham, WID Officer & Program Development Officer
- Ms. Nina Kavetskaya, Assistant to Environmental Team
- Mr. Gary Linden, Program Economist, Office of market Transition
- Mr. Ken McNamara, Environment Project Specialist, Office of Social Transition
- Mr. Alex Newton, Regional Legal Advisor
- Ms. Kai Nissley, Senior Advisor, Office of Social Transition
- Mr. Barry Primm, General Development Officer, Office of Social Transition
- Ms. Marilyn Schmidt, Director, Office of Social Transition

##### Strategic Assistance Area 1 (Market Transition) Contractors

- Agricultural Cooperative Development International (ACDI)
  - Mr. Michael Feldmose, Director, Food Systems Restructuring Project, Washington, DC
  - Ms. Lauren Sroczynski, Project Coordinator, Farmer-to-Farmer Project
- Carana Corporation
  - Ms. Veronica John, Small Scale Privatization and Enterprise Support Project Director
- Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund
  - Mr. James Anderson, Vice President
- Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI)
  - Ms. Martha Blaxall, Vice President, Market Development
  - Ms. Molly Curtin, Central Asian Representative

- Ms. Ellen Laurie, Consultant, Pension Reform Project
- International Executive Service Corps (IESC)
  - Ms. Theresa Weber, Regional Director
  - Ms. Olga Neretina, Deputy Director
- IRIS
  - Mr. Tom O'Brien, Senior Counsel
  - Ramzia Tonkopy, Senior Attorney
- Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA)
  - Mr. Ben Steinberg, Country Representative
  - Ms. Lilah Bagautdinova, Kazakstan Community Loan Fund, Regional Director

##### Strategic Assistance Area 2 (Democratic Transition) Contractors

- American Bar Association (ABA)
  - Ms. Patricia Vall, Liaison
  - Mr. Igor Fastov, Assistant Liaison
- Counterpart Consortium
  - Mr. Leonard Klein, Regional Director
  - Ms. Mansiya Kainazarova, NGO Development
- International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)
  - Mr. Anthony Bowyer, Project Manager Central Asia
  - Sharen Shackelford, Program Assistant, Europe and Asia

##### Strategic Assistance Area 3 (Social Sector Transition) Contractors

- Center for Disease Control (CDC)
  - Mr. Bruce Ross, Public Health Advisor
- Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), Environmental Economics & Policy Project
  - Mr. John Strickland, Deputy Executor
  - Ms. Svetlana Ten, Economic Assistant
- International City Managers Association
  - Mr. John Wegge
- IPPF
  - Ms. Carol Jacobson, Representative

**Human Resources Development**

- Academy for Educational Development •  
Mr. David Benedetti
- Zhemuy Milovidova
  - Ms. Ruth Rosenberg
- American Council for Collaboration in English and Language Study: Bradley Program
  - Ms. Rachel Nevilli

**Other Organizations**

- **Soros Foundation**
  - Mr. George Zarubin, Executive Director
- **Peace Corps of the USA**
  - Mr. Michael Stewart, Associate Director, Business
- **United Nations**
  - Ms. Christine Watkins, UNV Specialist and Gender Focal Point
  - Ms. Galiya Khasanova, WID Program Officer
- **NGOs**
  - Business Women's Association of Kazakhstan
    - Ms. Svetlana Alzhanova
    - Ms. Rashida Mukhamedova
    - Ms. Raushan Sarsembayeva
    - Ms. Gulzhakhan Shamshatova
  - International Environmental Association of Women of Orient
    - Ms. Urkiz Ilieva, President
  - Parents Association of Disabled Children (ARDI)
    - Ms. Asiya Akhtanova, Chair

**Individuals**

- Ms. Rosamund Shreeves, Researcher, University of Wolverhampton, UK

**KYRGYZSTAN****USAID**

- Ms. CJ Rushin-Bell, Representative

**Strategic Assistance Area 1 (Market Transition) Contractors**

- ARD/Checchi
  - Mr. Brian Kemple

- Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund
  - Mr. Thomas Jacobs, Vice President
- Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA)
  - Mr. Graham Sim, Director of Finance
  - Ms. Kirsten Weiss, Business Trainer

**Strategic Assistance Area 2 (Democratic Transition) Contractors**

- American Bar Association
  - Ms. Amy Franck, Liaison
  - Mr. Christopher Scott, Liaison
- Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA)
  - Mr. Thomas Carmondy, Field Director, Central Asia
- Counterpart Consortium
  - Mr. Joel Levin, Acting Director
  - Ms. Janna Rysakova, NGO Trainer
- National Democratic Institute (NDI)
  - Mr. Richard Stoddard

**Other Organizations**

- **Kyrgyzstan Institute of Maternity**
  - Ms. Kongaldieva Aigul Almanbekovana
- **Mercy Corps**
  - Mr. Tom Ewert, Director
- **United Nations**
  - Ms. Lori Handranhan, UNV
  - Ms. Damira Sartbayeva, Director of UNDP/WID Bureau

**TAJIKISTAN****USAID**

- Mr. Richard Fraenkel, Representative

**UZBEKISTAN****USAID**

- Mr. David Mandel, Representative

**Strategic Assistance Area 1 (Market Transition) Contractors**

- Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund
  - Ms. Lisa Tarrantino, Vice President, Asian Crossroads Loan Company
  - Nigora Yuldasheva

- Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI)
  - Mr. Daniel Wartonic, Chief of Party
- Winrock International)
  - Inobat Avezmuratova

**Strategic Assistance Area 2 (Democratic Transition) Contractors**

- Counterpart Consortium
  - Ms. Melannie Reimer, Director

**Strategic Assistance Area 3 (Social Sector Transition) Contractors**

- Futures Group
  - Ms. Margarita Gokun-Silver, Director
  - Ms. Yuldasheva, Chairwoman, Fund for Healthy Generation

**Human Resources Development**

- Academy for Educational Development (AED) NET Project
  - Ms. Maija-Leena Clarkson, Project Director
  - Roundtable with NET Alumni
    - Ms. Tadjikhon D. Saydikramova, Businesswomen's Association
    - Ms. Zuhra Azimova, Directorate for Legal Assistance
    - Munira Samarkhojaeva, Director of "Himoya" (legal center)
    - Ms. Lyudmila Tulina, Environmental Risk Management
    - Ms. Mahbuba Ergasheva, consultant

**Other Organizations**

- **Eurasia Foundation**
  - Mr. Fred Smith, Regional Director
  - Ms. Rachel Larkin, Assistant Director
- **Women's Resource Center**
  - Ms. Flora Pirnazorova
- **United Nations**
  - Ms. Dona Abdurazokova, Head of UNDP/WID Unit
  - Ms. Meryem Aslan, UNV WID Officer
- **NGOs**
  - Alcoholics Anonymous
    - Ms. Barno Turgunova
  - Business Women's Association of Uzbekistan

- Ms. Dildora Makhmudova, Chairman
- Ms. Tadjikhon D. Saydikramova, Director
- KRDI Club
  - Ms. Grenada Kurochkina
- Social Service
  - Ms. Mila Hafizova and Ms. Natasha Peretrutova, Social Service
- Society for Diabetic Children
  - Ms. Zelfira Sattarova

**Individuals**

- Prof. Diana Pearce, Fulbright Professor

**USAID/WASHINGTON**

- Ms. Delphia Dirks, Desk Officer, Central Asian Republics



## ATTACHMENT C

### References Cited and Additional Information Sources

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## ATTACHMENT D

### USAID's *Gender Plan of Action*



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## STATEMENT BY J. BRIAN ATWOOD ADMINISTRATOR, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### GENDER PLAN OF ACTION MARCH 12, 1996

More than twenty years ago, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) officially recognized the critical role of women in development by establishing an Office of Women in Development. This was only in a long journey to fully address gender issues in USAID programs.

USAID has played a leadership role in the donor community in focusing on the crucial role of women in social and economic development since the early 1970s. During the last several years, USAID has made significant increases in the level of funding directed to programs that directly benefit women and girls. The agency has launched major new initiatives in the areas of reproductive health for women, girls' education, women and microenterprise, and women's political participation and legal rights.

These represent significant accomplishments. But perhaps the greatest accomplishment is the increasing attention that for development to be effective, programs must pay attention to the central role of women in the economic and social advancement of a nation.

But does the agency still miss opportunities because we have not designed and implemented our activities to reflect the different roles and needs of women and men in development? Undoubtedly.

We must make the most of our opportunities to achieve lasting results:

- ! Our efforts to strengthen democratic institutions must always consider the obstacles that women face as they seek to gain access to their own political and legal systems;
- ! Our efforts to improve incomes must regularly consider whether the new earnings will be controlled by men or women -- research has found -- who are more likely than fathers to spend it on children's nutrition; and,
- ! USAID's credit services and training programs must always make sure that office hours and course schedules take into account the different time constraints that men and women face.

To make sure that USAID programs continue to achieve their best results, we will make some changes in the way we do business. We will ensure that our systems facilitate and encourage attention to gender issues, and we will strengthen our technical capacity to address women's issues as development issues.

Some actions can be taken right away -- and we are taking these actions. This year, the Agency Sector Review, in which we examine Agency performance against each of its objectives, will focus particularly on gender issues. We will modify the Agency's Strategic Framework to reflect the key role of gender considerations in the achievement of our goals. We have appointed a senior policy advisor on Women in Development, in the Bureau of Policy Planning and Coordination, to reinforce the integration of gender issues into Agency policies across sectors. We are implementing a Women in Development fellows program to help build our technical expertise. Several other key measures, including our Gender Plan of Action, will soon be underway.

Equally important, we explore additional measures that will ensure continued attention to gender issues in our programs. We are exploring measures that might be taken in the areas of data collection and analysis, personnel recruitment, training and performance, or procurement systems.

To this end, I have charged the Agency's Counselor to draw on your expertise, and to work closely with the staff who will ultimately be held responsible for implementing such actions. While there may be some options that we may not be able to pursue for lack of resources, I am confident that actions we take will yield results in program performance. I look forward to receiving the results of the Counselor's work by May 31.

Through attention to gender issues, our development assistance programs will be more equitable, more effective, and -- ultimately -- more sustainable. We can all do a better job of making this come to pass.

**USAID Gender Plan of Action  
March 1996**

For more than 20 years, USAID has worked to ensure the integration of gender considerations into its programs. The Agency is continuing to foster the institutional changes needed to support women in development. Having a variety of options for "institutionalizing" attention to issues concerning women in development, USAID has developed this Gender Plan of Action.

In order to build commitment to consideration of gender issues as key development issues, USAID will:

- ! Modify the Agency's strategic framework -- objectives, approaches and indicators, as appropriate -- to reflect each strategic objective the key role of women in development;
- ! Update and strengthen the Agency's Women in Development Policy Paper; and,
- ! Ensure that gender considerations are incorporated into the key strategic framework forthcoming implementation guidance.

In order to build capacity to address women in development issues in all Agency programs, USAID will:

- ! Appoint a senior policy advisor on women in development in the Policy Planning Coordination Bureau to oversee the integration of gender issues into Agency policies across sectors;
- ! Implement a women in development fellows program to help build a technical cadre to support the integration of gender issues into development programs, and to allow for the assignment of advisors in all USAID Bureau offices;
- ! Develop guidance regarding the authority, mandate, and technical qualifications of women in development coordinators throughout the Agency; and
- ! Incorporate gender considerations into Agency guidance on re-engineering and re-engineering training that encompasses all functions, including monitoring and evaluation; CDIE training in the development of new entry training; and sectoral training.

In order to build incentives for the consideration of gender issues, USAID will:

- ! Establish a women in development Performance Fund to award supplementary program funds to Agency programs that best address gender issues as integral components of effective development assistance.

Finally, the Agency's Counselor will:

- ! Report to the Administrator regarding the feasibility of actions such as addressing program performance issues in development via the Agency's system for evaluating the performance of personnel; improving direct-hi expertise in women in development through the Agency's system of technical backstops and/or training o

personnel; improving USAID's collection and use of sex disaggregated indicators of results; and, providing incentives for improved women in development expertise among contractors and collaborators via USAID procurement procedures.

- ! Develop and report to the Administrator on implementation plans for those actions deemed necessary and
- ! Monitor the overall implementation of the Gender Plan of Action, including such additional feasible actions agreed.

In undertaking this charge, the Counselor will consult with, and receive the strong support of USAID central and regional Bureaus. The Counselor will also consult with the USAID partner community -- nongovernmental organizations (and, in particular, the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid), universities, and consultants. The Counselor will report to the Administrator as follows:

- ! By May 31, 1996, provide recommendations regarding the feasibility of various options for further building USAID's ability to incorporate women in development considerations throughout its programs.
- ! By July 31, 1996, provide implementation plans for feasible actions approved by the Administrator.
- ! By October 31, 1996, report on the overall implementation of the Gender Action Plan. It is expected that by that point, the Plan in its entirety will be substantially implemented.

**USAID GENDER PLAN OF ACTION: ADDITIONAL MEASURES  
JUNE 12, 1996**

- ! Position descriptions for Agency Program Officers will be revised to specifically include responsibility for addressing gender issues.
- ! Experience and understanding of women in development issues will be taken into consideration in recruiting Program Officers and appropriate technical officers.
- ! Guidance concerning the critical need to address gender issues in development will be issued to the staff, committees that rate the performance of both civil service and foreign service personnel, and to the board select foreign service personnel for promotion.
- ! USAID competitive assistance guidelines will include a requirement that applicants for assistance demonstrate abilities to address gender/WID issues. In contracting, a methodology will be developed for including a requirement regarding gender issues in statements of work for RFPs.
- ! Indicators of program impact on the social and economic status of women will be included in the "menu" of indicators being developed for USAID missions. In addition, the Agency Strategic Framework will be supplemented with sex disaggregated results indicators and the collection and analysis of sex disaggregated data, as appropriate.
- ! Language will be included in the Automated Directives System specifying that strategic planning and reporting documents should indicate how gender considerations are being addressed.
- ! Each full mission will review and revise its Mission Orders as necessary in order to apply to its directives the forthcoming revision of the Agency's WID Policy.



## **ATTACHMENT E**

### **Strategic Assistance Areas, Program Summaries, and Implementing Partners**

See following pages.

# KAZAKSTAN

**Kazakhstan Program Overview**  
**U.S. Agency for International Development Regional Mission for Central Asia**  
**USAID/CAR**  
**15 November 1996**

**Strategic Assistance Area 1 - Market Transition:** “Foster the emergence of a competitive, market-oriented economy in which the majority of the economic resources are privately owned and managed.”

<b>1.1 Increased transfer of state-owned assets to the private sector</b>	
<b>Mass Privatization:</b> USAID provides technical assistance to complete the transparent and competitive transfer of the majority of Kazakhstan’s industrial assets and employment to the private sector through the provision of technical support to Kazakhstan’s State Property Committee. This includes coupon distribution, public education, conduction of auctions, creation of an investment fund association, simplification of the share registration process, and other technical assistance.	Chemonics (12/96 or 06/97)
<b>Demonopolization and Small-Scale Privatization:</b> USAID provides policy advice to the Kazakstani State Property Committee (SPC) on segmenting and privatizing the wholesale warehousing and transportation sectors. USAID assists with implementation of pilot transactions and preparation of guidelines for implementing this program on a national basis; Policy advice on how to break up monopoly conglomerates and support privatization with assistance in corporatization and marketing; USAID is assisting with the final stage of small-scale privatization.	Carana Corp. (Late 1996)
<b>Public Education:</b> USAID provides public education support for the government’s privatization and capital markets projects. As the transfer of assets to the private sector comes to an end, public education efforts focus on new initiatives, including commercial law and accounting reform. General efforts include mass media campaigns and a newsletter for government counterparts involved in the economic transition. The project also contributes to the development of institutional capacity of business organizations in the areas of public relations, market research and dissemination of business and professional information.	Overseas Strategic Consulting (12/96)
<b>1.2 Increased soundness of fiscal policies and fiscal management practices</b>	
<b>Tax Reform:</b> USAID supports the formulation and implementation of economic restructuring policies in the fiscal area, including drafting and implementation of the new tax code.	KPMG/Fiscal Reform
<b>Intergovernmental Finance Reform:</b> USAID assists in rationalizing expenditure and taxation authority at the various levels of government, including national, oblast, and city levels, to maximize efficiency of tax collection and spending at all levels of government; and enhance public investment decision making.	KPMG
<b>External Debt Management:</b> USAID’s developing the institutional capacity of the GOK to track and effectively manage external debt.	IBTCI

<b>Budgetary Reform:</b> USAID-funded Treasury advisors are assisting the government with development and use of a budget classification system, and they are working on a national and local budget law for Kazakhstan.	KPMG
1.3 Improved, more sustainable private business operations	
<b>Commercial Law - Trade and Investment:</b> USAID supports entry into GATT/WTO, the establishment of a strengthened customs service, and other areas related to the legal and regulatory environment for trade and investment in Kazakhstan (foreign and domestic). Assistance focuses on developing a general enabling environment that can facilitate international trade and attract new direct investment.	Booz Allen & Hamilton
<b>Commercial Law - Bankruptcy Reform:</b> USAID promotes the process of orderly payments of debts to creditors through the development of enabling legislation, creation of pilot projects involving state agencies and judicial institutions, and innovative and effective approaches to resolve debt/bankruptcy issues in the privatization process. In addition, the assistance contributes to establishing the bankruptcy process as a means of facilitating new business development, risk assessment, and the financing of enterprises.	IRIS
<b>Commercial Law - General Business Law:</b> USAID assistance is targeting constraints to business operations in three areas: reform of collateral law, promotion of the public awareness of the role of commercial law, and simplification of laws governing the formation and operation of business enterprises.	IRIS
<b>Commercial Law-Management Oversight Project:</b> USAID provides an Independent Oversight Coordinator to liaise all the international donors (to include World Bank, European Bank, Asian Development Bank and others) of the commercial law reform projects.	TCCA
<b>Commercial Law - Training:</b> USAID activity involves training in the commercial law components (trade and investment, general business law, and bankruptcy) with training in the United States and Kazakhstan.	ARD/Checchi
<b>Investment Capital:</b> The Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund provides loans to small and medium sized private enterprises and takes equity positions in private Kazakstani companies. The fund also provides financing to Kazakstani-American joint ventures.	Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund
<b>Private Enterprise Development:</b> USAID provides technical, managerial and business-planning assistance to private and privatizing enterprises through American retired business executives, as well as business development assistance through field staff. This project works closely with CAAEF to help enterprises access and use financing.	International Executive Service Corps
<b>Agribusiness and Agribanking Development:</b> USAID assists individual Kazakstani agribusiness and banking institutions in developing joint venture programs between the United States and private agribusiness. Assistance includes agricultural specialists, marketing development, business planning services, and banking experts to develop the agricultural banking systems.	Agricultural Cooperative Development International

<b>Private Agriculture and Cooperative Development:</b> USAID promotes development of effective cooperatives and associations of private farmers and assists private farmers and agribusinesses in planning, managing, financing, marketing and distribution of their production.	Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance and Winrock Intl.
<b>Post-Privatization:</b> USAID promotes change in the performance of key sectors of the economy by breaking down state structures while supporting selected enterprises. The emphasis of this support is on smaller-scale processing units, marketing/procurement and wholesaling in the following sectors: fruits/vegetables, trucking, pharmaceuticals, milk/meat, gasoline, warehousing/retail, grain/bread, and agricultural inputs (machinery and chemicals).	Carana Corporation (12/96)
<b>Economics Education:</b> USAID has taken a lead role in developing the M.A. program in Economics at the Kazakhstan Institute for Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP) through faculty training and by providing western professors.	IRIS
<b>Housing Reform:</b> USAID provides assistance to the Kazakstani Ministries of Housing and Justice on the basic institutions, laws and technical knowledge needed to privatize and manage Kazakhstan's housing industry. Programs also support the development of housing associations in Kazakstan and works at the local level on improving municipal performance.	International City Managers Association
<b>1.4 A competitive private financial sector that is more responsive to the needs of a market-oriented economy</b>	
<b>Stock Exchange/Primary Market Development:</b> USAID is assisting the implementation of a newly-created securities exchange which includes advice on the market infrastructure.	FMI, International Management Group
<b>Capital Market Institutional Development:</b> USAID supports the mass privatization process and emerging securities markets by creating essential entities such as share registries, custodial and back-office systems. Many functions will be created in a regional context.	PRAGMA
<b>Corporate Accounting:</b> USAID provides assistance to the Ministry of Finance to build the institutional framework and standards for corporate accounting using international standards in Kazakstan.	KPMG/Barents Group (12/96); CFED
<b>Bankers Training:</b> USAID promotes teaching commercial bankers a range of modern banking principles. The USAID funded program is now merged with a similar, EU-TACIS-funded operation.	KPMG/Bankers Training (12/96)
<b>Banking Supervision:</b> USAID provides training to the National Bank to modernize its bank supervision unit to ensure that it can adequately monitor the financial performance of the commercial banking sector.	KPMG/Banking Supervision group (01/97); IBTCI
<b>Monetary Restructuring:</b> USAID advises on high level policy to the National Bank. Additionally, it supports training of the Bank's monetary research staff.	KPMG/Monetary Restructuring Group(12/96)

#### REGIONAL PROGRAM:

Strategic Assistance Area 1 - Regional Energy and Environmental Transitions: “Support the development of national and regional energy and water resource policies and practices which foster international trade and investment, reduce regional tensions, and increase social stability and environmental sustainability.”

<b>1.5 An effective policy framework in place to achieve private investment in an environmentally sound, regionally efficient, market oriented energy sector</b>	
<b>Energy Contracting and Power Pooling:</b> USAID promotes the integrated development and economically efficient operation of regional electric power systems through international contracts and the creation of a competitive power market by assisting regional energy organizations and the Ministries of Energy, Coal and gas; Water Resources Management bodies; and other government agencies in each country.	Hagler Bailly, IRG, CH2M-Hill, HIID, Burns and Roe, U.S. Energy Association, NET
<b>Water Policy:</b> USAID supports region-wide cooperation in sustainable water management through the development of international treaties, agreements and protocols dealing with water pricing, sharing, quality, and cost recovery for irrigation, urban, industrial, and energy generation use.	IRG, CH2M-Hill, HIID and Hagler Bailly
<b>Oil and Gas Activities:</b> USAID assists the Ministries of Oil and Gas and the state energy companies in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the development of implementing rules and regulations concerning petroleum operations, pipeline tariff reform, sector privatization and in attracting foreign investment. It also assists in the training of the ministry staff involved in international operations and negotiations.	Hagler Bailly, HIID and NET
<b>Energy Led Economic Growth:</b> USAID assists the traditional policy making branches of the governments of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in their assessments and decisions on macroeconomic issues associated with economic growth and investment for resource-based economies. The goal of such assistance is to direct income into sectors such as education, environmental protection, market reform etc. which lead to long-term social and economic stability.	HIID and Hagler Bailly
<b>3.3 Reduced environmental risks to public health</b>	
<b>U.S. Aral Sea Program:</b> The USAID funded program to improve the sustainability of the Sari-Bulak main water transmission system, and the Kosaman and Berdykol water well fields in Kyzyl Orda Oblast, is in its final stage of implementation. USAID also provides expertise and training to public health and water management organizations operating in the same area. Kazakhstan also participates in the USAID funded region-wide cooperation in water management program.	CH2M-Hill and HIID
<b>Urban and Industrial Pollution:</b> USAID promotes the use of market based mechanisms of pollution control, more efficient use of natural resources and the inclusion of environmental concerns in the privatization process in both government and the private sector. USAID also provides assistance for drafting a new national environmental protection law; implementing rules and regulations for water pricing; and a law providing for the formation of agricultural water user associations. A USAID program for reducing pollution emissions at selected heavy industries in the Irtysh River Basin is entering its final stages of implementation.	Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), World Environmental Council (WEC)

**Strategic Assistance Area 2 - Democratic Transition:** “Support the transition to transparent and accountable governance and the empowerment of citizens through democratic political processes.”

<b>2.1 Increased, better-informed citizens' participation in political and economic decision-making</b>	
<b>Civic Society Development:</b> USAID provides training, small grants, and related support for NGOs as well as other institutions in a variety of areas aimed at promoting a civil society and supporting the economic and political transition in Central Asia.	Eurasia Foundation, Counterpart Consortium
<b>Civic Society Development:</b> USAID provides small grants to grassroots, indigenous NGOs involved in environmental issues, often with a community development concern.	ISAR, Counterpart Consortium
<b>Civic Society Development-Rule of Law:</b> USAID promotes the establishment of a democracy center, provision of small grants to local NGOs involved in rule of law, human rights, and other civic society issues.	American Legal Consortium (12/96); Counterpart Consortium
<b>Civic Education:</b> USAID promotes civic education, discussion and initiative, through seminars on strategies for citizen involvement and citizen issue discussion groups. Programs are driven by the results of the IFES Survey of Voter Attitudes.	International Foundation for Election Systems
<b>Media Support:</b> USAID provides training, technical assistance and equipment to improve the professionalism and economic viability of independent television stations in Kazakhstan. It also supports a local news exchange and development of a network of independent television stations.	Internews, Counterpart Consortium
<b>Parliamentary Development:</b> USAID assists the parliament in the adoption of procedures, legislative oversight, drafting and other means of accountability, including transparent positive dialogue with NGOs and other interest groups. USAID provides press expertise to the Parliament.	American Bar Association, National Democratic Institute
<b>Judicial Development:</b> With Embassy assistance, USAID seeks to enhance greater transparency, accountability and responsiveness from the executive branch by the adoption and implementation of laws.	American Bar Association
<b>Legal Reform:</b> USAID promotes the development of indigenous bar associations in Kazakhstan.	American Bar Association
<b>2.3 More effective, responsive and accountable local government</b>	
<b>Municipal Finance and Management:</b> USAID provides the Atyrau City Administration with technical assistance and training in support of municipal management and finance procedures based on democratic governance and a free market economic system.	Research Triangle Institute

**Strategic Assistance Area 3 - Social Sector Transition:** “Respond to the humanitarian crises and strengthen the capacity to manage the human dimension of the transition to democracy.”

<b>3.2 Improved sustainability of social benefits and services</b>	
<b>Health Care Financing and Pharmacy Privatization:</b> USAID assists the Government of Kazakhstan to implement comprehensive health reforms to address the fundamental problems in the health sector: underfinancing and inefficiency. The project promotes the development of a health insurance system to increase and diversify funding for health care, the design and implementation of incentive-based provider payment methods to increase efficiency and competition, and the restructuring of service delivery to strengthen primary care, improve quality and increase consumer satisfaction and choice. The project also provides assistance in the pharmaceutical sector to privatize drug distribution at both the wholesale and retail levels, and to rationalize drug utilization through the development of an essential drug list, formularies, and a drug information system.	Abt Associates, Inc.
<b>Social Marketing of Contraceptives:</b> USAID supports the development of a commercial market for pharmaceutical products in general and specifically modern contraceptives. Included with commercial marketing activities is a large training component in consumer-based service delivery and contraceptive technology.	Futures Group
<b>Medical Partnerships:</b> USAID supports medical partnerships in Almaty with the Tucson Medical Center, and in Semipalatinsk with the Methodist Hospital, Houston and four hospitals in Semipalatinsk. Both partnerships utilize the practical expertise from US health providers to a) close the health care knowledge gap through exchange with U.S. partners; b) improve the productivity of health providers through management training; and c) affect large-scale change from the bottom up by disseminating successes of partnership demonstration projects.	American International Health Alliance
<b>Epidemiology and Health Surveillance:</b> USAID provides assistance and training to develop and refine the modern health surveillance capacity of Kazakhstan. Training of Ministry of Health oblast-level officials in epidemiology and modern health surveillance techniques is a key element of the project, as well as providing technical assistance in high-priority disease areas.	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
<b>Vaccine Support:</b> USAID promotes the establishment of vaccine security as a means to ensure that immunization from basic diseases will be cost-effective and efficient. This continues work focused on reforming the Immunization Schedule policies.	John Snow, Inc./BASICS
<b>Central Asia Infectious Disease Program (CAIDP):</b> USAID supports efforts to reduce child morbidity and mortality caused by acute respiratory infections and diarrheal disease.	Center for Disease Control (CDC), BASICS
<b>Reproductive Health Services Expansion Program:</b> USAID provides assistance and training to modernize, expand and improve the quality and sustainability of family health services. Under this component, USAID supports technical assistance and funding for the Kazakhstan Demographic and Health Survey.	Macro International, JHPIEGO, AVSC
<b>Housing Allowances:</b> USAID created the first pilot Housing Allowance Center in Semipalatinsk, designed to process all people who qualify for housing support in one location. Based on requests from other cities in Kazakhstan, additional Centers are being considered.	International City Managers Association

<b>Pension Reform:</b> USAID supports the development of private pensions in Kazakhstan and the introduction of a private pension law.	DAI(12/96); IMCC
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## Human Resources Development

<b>NIS Education and Training Project:</b> USAID trains mid-to-senior level Kazakstani leaders and professionals in areas directly relevant to the transition to democracy and a free-market economy. Training is provided via short-term training courses in the United States, in addition to a follow-on program for returned participants to augment U.S. training. This includes access to an alumni center equipped with reference and communications equipment, and in-country training for returned participants to build on technical and management training initially received in the United States. Over 650 persons have participated to date.	Academy for Educational Development (NET)
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## KYRGYZSTAN

**Kyrgyzstan Program Overview**  
**U.S. Agency for International Development Regional Mission for Central Asia**  
**USAID/CAR**  
**November 15, 1996**

**Strategic Assistance Area 1 - Market Transition:** “Foster the emergence of a competitive, market-oriented economy in which the majority of the economic resources are privately owned and managed.”

<b>1.1 Increased transfer of state-owned assets to the private sector</b>	
<b>Mass Privatization:</b> USAID financing of Kyrgyz Mass Privatization has ended successfully with privatization of approximately 1,000 enterprises representing a major portion of industrial employment in the country. By proceeding with sectoral privatization in mining, energy, telecommunications, aviation and print media, the State Property Fund has assumed responsibility of auction centers activities and is continuing privatization auctions of the enterprises added in its 1996 plan.	Price Waterhouse
<b>Public Education:</b> USAID assists the Kyrgyz Government in monitoring public opinion, deepening understanding of market reforms and disseminating information concerning the privatization development program, as well as other areas of the Market Transition assistance. This is being accomplished through several popular TV programs and distribution of a variety of materials produced in cooperation with all market transition teams.	Overseas Strategic Consulting
<b>1.2 Increased soundness of fiscal policies and fiscal management practices</b>	
<b>Fiscal Reform:</b> USAID provides assistance to the Ministry of Finance and the Tax Inspectorate helping with formulation and implementation of economic restructuring policies in the fiscal area. This includes extensive drafting and training concerning the new tax code, and extensive technical assistance to create a centralized and automated tax information gathering and reporting system, to assist with forecasting income and overall government planning.	KPMG/Fiscal reform
<b>Budgetary Reform:</b> A United States Treasury advisor is working with the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank in close cooperation with USAID to improve and assist with launching of primary and secondary markets for government securities.	U.S. Treasury Department
<b>Macro-economic Restructuring:</b> USAID assists the Ministry of Economy with development and use of economic-forecasting models, improving the capacity of the ministry to provide useful economic information to both the government and the market. It also provided market reform advice on economic policy until July 1996 to the Ministry of Economy through a long-term resident advisor.	KPMG

<b>1.3 Improved, more sustainable private business operations</b>	
<b>Commercial Law - Trade and Investment:</b> USAID assists the Kyrgyz government with its application to join the WTO. It also is helping to improve and streamline customs procedures and administration, trying to help remove and reduce disincentives for trade and investment in Kyrgyzstan (foreign and domestic). In addition, USAID supports the government with its efforts to improve a foreign investment law, and is encouraging through training and advice, development and utilization of procurement laws and a monitoring agency to encourage greater transparency and competition.	Booz Allen & Hamilton
<b>Commercial Law - Bankruptcy Reform:</b> USAID advises and helps with drafting, implementation and clarification of bankruptcy laws as part of privatization processes and support to the State Property Fund. This is being accomplished through the creation of pilot projects involving state agencies and judicial institutions. In addition, this support of the bankruptcy process facilitates new business development, risk assessment, and the financing of enterprises.	Booz Allen & Hamilton
<b>Commercial Law - General Business Law:</b> USAID technical assistance addresses constraints to business operations that are not covered by the first two components (trade and investment/bankruptcy). The project provides drafting and technical assistance to implement parts I, II and III of the Civil Code and the Collateral Law, laws on registration of legal entities, partnerships and economic enterprises and intellectual property. USAID also addresses public awareness of new commercial laws as part of its implementation efforts.	IRIS
<b>Commercial Law - Training:</b> USAID supports training to Kyrgyz attorneys and judges, coordinating information, and training, concerning issues and laws developed as part of the other three commercial law components (trade and investments, general business law and bankruptcy). This includes limited training of instructors in the United States and concentrated in-country training.	ARD/Checchi
<b>Housing Reform:</b> USAID provides technical assistance and training to the Ministries of Housing and Justice, on the basic institutions, laws and technical knowledge needed to privatize and manage Kyrgyzstan's housing industry. A separate focus for 1996 is a pilot land registration project, needed as a skeletal structure for effective housing reform.	International City Management Association (ICMA)
<b>Investment Capital:</b> The USAID-funded Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund (CAAEF) provides needed capital investments into the market to small and medium sized private enterprises by taking equity positions in Kyrgyz enterprises with appropriate business plans. The fund also provides financing to Kyrgyz-American joint ventures.	Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund (CAAEF)
<b>Private Enterprise Development:</b> USAID provides technical, managerial and business-planning assistance to private and privatizing enterprises through American retired executives, as well as business development assistance through field staff. This project works closely with the CAAEF to help enterprises gain access to and use of available financial resources.	International Executive Service Corps (IESC)
<b>Agribanking Development:</b> USAID provides technical assistance in the form of bank training to banking institutions in order to support private agribusiness in Kyrgyzstan.	Agricultural Cooperative Development Int.
<b>Small-Scale Private Agriculture Development:</b> USAID assists private farmers and agribusinesses in planning, managing, financing, marketing and distribution of their production.	Winrock International

<b>Local Enterprise Restructuring and Capacity-Building:</b> USAID promotes improved performance in key distribution systems by identifying and assisting with the break-up of monopolistic state structures, developing local capacity to support enterprise restructuring, and supporting selected enterprises within key systems to help access market information about available financing and strategic partners.	Carana Corporation
<b>Village Banking Development:</b> USAID is developing more than 200 village banks with 2,500 members throughout the northern and southern parts of the republic, providing support to help them become self-sustaining. USAID is training local staff to manage small credit institutions.	Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA)
<b>1.4 A competitive private financial sector that is more responsive to the needs of a market-oriented economy</b>	
<b>Capital Market Institutional Development:</b> USAID supports the development of a capital market to help new private and privatized enterprises raise investment and/or working capital. USAID also helped create a stock-exchange and the State Securities agency which regulates it. USAID assists in investment fund regulations, licensing and training of dealers and brokers, independent share registrars and systems for functioning of the capital market.	Pragma
<b>Corporate Governance and Finance:</b> USAID technical assistance is designed to develop the capacity and independence of the securities market participants and institutions, including the State Securities Agency, investment funds and their association, and brokers/dealers and their association, as well as providing training for the business community in the areas of corporate governance, shareholder rights and finance.	FMI
<b>Corporate Accounting:</b> USAID provides technical assistance to assist the Ministry of Finance with efforts to enact standards and implement western-style accounting at the enterprise level.	KPMG
<b>Banking Supervision:</b> USAID provides the National Bank with comprehensive, hands-on training to modernize its bank supervision unit to ensure that it can adequately monitor the financial performance of the commercial banking sector.	KPMG
<b>Banking Restructuring:</b> USAID supports technical assistance to enhance the effectiveness of the National Bank of Kyrgyzstan's operations and its transformation into a modern, central bank, as well as, introducing best banking practices to improve operations, accounting and lending practices at three "pilot" commercial banks.	KPMG

## REGIONAL PROGRAM:

**Strategic Assistance Area 1 - Regional Energy and Environmental Transitions:** "Support the development of national and regional energy and water resource policies and practices which foster international trade and investment, reduce regional tensions, and increase social stability and environmental sustainability."

**1.5 An effective policy framework in place to achieve private investment in an environmentally sound, regionally efficient, market oriented energy sector**

<p><b>Energy Contracting and Power Pooling:</b> USAID promotes the integrated development and economically efficient operation of regional electric power systems through international contracts and the creation of a competitive power market by assisting regional energy organizations and the Ministries of Energy, Coal and gas; Water Resources Management bodies; and other government agencies in each country.</p>	<p>Hagler Bailly, IRG, CH2M-Hill, HIID, Burns and Roe, U.S. Energy Association, NET</p>
<p><b>Water Policy:</b> USAID supports region-wide cooperation in sustainable water management through the development of international treaties, agreements and protocols dealing with water pricing, sharing, quality, and cost recovery for irrigation, urban, industrial, and energy generation use.</p>	<p>IRG, CH2M-Hill, HIID, Hagler Bailly</p>
<p><b>Oil and Gas Activities:</b> USAID assists the Ministries of Oil and Gas and the state energy companies in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the development of implementing rules and regulations concerning petroleum operations, pipeline tariff reform, sector privatization and in attracting foreign investment. It also assists in the training of the ministry staff involved in international operations and negotiations.</p>	<p>Hagler Bailly, HIID, and NET</p>
<p><b>Energy Led Economic Growth:</b> USAID assists the traditional policy making branches of the governments of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in their assessments and decisions on macroeconomic issues associated with economic growth and investment for resource-based economies. The goal of such assistance is to direct income into sectors such as education, environmental protection, market reform etc. which lead to long-term social and economic stability.</p>	<p>HIID and Hagler Bailly</p>
<p><b>3.3 Reduced environmental risks to public health</b></p>	
<p><b>U.S. Aral Sea Program:</b> The USAID funded program to improve the sustainability of the Sari-Bulak main water transmission system, and the Kosaman and Berdykol water well fields in Kyzyl Orda Oblast, is in its final stage of implementation. USAID also provides expertise and training to public health and water management organizations operating in the same area. Kazakhstan also participates in the USAID funded region-wide cooperation in water management program.</p>	<p>CH2M-Hill and HIID</p>
<p><b>Urban and Industrial Pollution:</b> USAID promotes the use of market based mechanisms of pollution control, more efficient use of natural resources and the inclusion of environmental concerns in the privatization process in both government and the private sector. USAID also provides assistance for drafting a new national environmental protection law; implementing rules and regulations for water pricing; and a law providing for the formation of agricultural water user associations. A USAID program for reducing pollution emissions at selected heavy industries in the Irtys River Basin is entering its final stages of implementation.</p>	<p>Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), World Environmental Council (WEC)</p>

**Strategic Assistance Area 2 - Democratic Transition:** Support the transition to transparent and accountable governance and the empowerment of citizens through democratic political processes.”

**2.1 Increased, better-informed citizens’ participation in political and economic decision-making**

<b>Non-governmental organizations:</b> USAID supports to empower NGOs in all strategic areas (democratic, market and social transition), with increased attention on leadership and coalition-building, as well as the legal and regulatory framework affecting NGOs. USAID will continue to facilitate the formation and effectiveness of bar associations and continuing legal education programs, as well as NGOs in agriculture, environment, health and other areas of civil society, to advocate for change.	Counterpart Consortium, ISAR, Eurasia Foundation, ABA
<b>Civic Education:</b> USAID will further the development of civic education programs through discussions of the IFES survey results, civic initiative planning on the local level, special courses and training capacities, education for and by the local bar, and training of leaders of NGOs and others.	International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), National Democratic Institute (NDI)
<b>Independent Media:</b> USAID provides technical assistance to non-governmental television and related radio stations. Activities include seminars and training manuals on beginning television management, advertising sales, television computer graphics, radio management and radio journalism. This project also works to develop regional and national independent television networks.	Internews
<b>Parliamentary Development:</b> USAID assists the parliament in the adoption of procedures, legislative oversight, drafting and other means of accountability, including transparent positive dialogue with NGOs, interest groups and constituents in the region..	American Bar Association (ABA), National Democratic Institute (NDI)
<b>Executive Branch Development:</b> With Embassy guidance and assistance, USAID seeks to enhance greater transparency, public discussion, accountability and responsiveness from the executive branch by the adoption and implementation of laws, and the institutionalization of the judiciary as an independent branch of government.	American Bar Association (ABA)
<b>Judicial Development:</b> USAID will encourage and assist in the development of an independent judiciary, a judicial association and a judicial code of ethics.	American Bar Association (ABA)
<b>2.3 More effective, responsive and accountable local government</b>	
<b>Municipal Finance and Management:</b> USAID provides the Karakol City Administration with technical assistance and training in support of municipal management and finance procedures based on democratic governance and a free market economic system.	Research Triangle Institute (RTI)

**Strategic Assistance Area 3 - Social Sector Transition:** “Respond to the humanitarian crises and strengthen the capacity to manage the human dimension of the transition to democracy.”

## **2.1 Increased, better-informed citizens’ participation in political and economic decision-making**

<b>Non-governmental organizations:</b> USAID supports to empower NGOs in all strategic areas (democratic, market and social transition), with increased attention on leadership and coalition-building, as well as the legal and regulatory framework affecting NGOs. USAID will continue to facilitate the formation and effectiveness of bar associations and continuing legal education programs, as well as NGOs in agriculture, environment, health and other areas of civil society, to advocate for change.	Counterpart Consortium, ISAR, Eurasia Foundation, ABA
<b>Civic Education:</b> USAID will further the development of civic education programs through discussions of the IFES survey results, civic initiative planning on the local level, special courses and training capacities, education for and by the local bar, and training of leaders of NGOs and others.	International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), National Democratic Institute (NDI)
<b>Independent Media:</b> USAID provides technical assistance to non-governmental television and related radio stations. Activities include seminars and training manuals on beginning television management, advertising sales, television computer graphics, radio management and radio journalism. This project also works to develop regional and national independent television networks.	Internews
<b>Parliamentary Development:</b> USAID assists the parliament in the adoption of procedures, legislative oversight, drafting and other means of accountability, including transparent positive dialogue with NGOs, interest groups and constituents in the region..	American Bar Association (ABA), National Democratic Institute (NDI)
<b>Executive Branch Development:</b> With Embassy guidance and assistance, USAID seeks to enhance greater transparency, public discussion, accountability and responsiveness from the executive branch by the adoption and implementation of laws, and the institutionalization of the judiciary as an independent branch of government.	American Bar Association (ABA)
<b>Judicial Development:</b> USAID will encourage and assist in the development of an independent judiciary, a judicial association and a judicial code of ethics.	American Bar Association (ABA)
<b>2.3 More effective, responsive and accountable local government</b>	
<b>Municipal Finance and Management:</b> USAID provides the Karakol City Administration with technical assistance and training in support of municipal management and finance procedures based on democratic governance and a free market economic system.	Research Triangle Institute (RTI)

**Strategic Assistance Area 4 - Social Sector Transition:** “Respond to the humanitarian crises and strengthen the capacity to manage the human dimension of the transition to democracy.”

### 3.2 Improved sustainability of social benefits and services

<b>Health Care Financing Reform:</b> USAID assists the Ministry of Health in the implementation of comprehensive reforms in the area of health care. Reforms will consist of restructuring the health delivery system and changing the financing of health care, including instituting new provider payment methods. The results should include increased competition in the health sector, improved efficiency in the allocation of resources, and involvement of the population in health care decision making. Family group practices have been formed to serve the entire Issyk-kul Oblast population and following a market campaign 83% exercised their right to free choice and enrolled in a Family Group Practice.	Abt Associates, Inc.
<b>Social Marketing of Contraceptives:</b> USAID supports the development of a commercial market for pharmaceutical products in general and specifically modern contraceptives. Included with commercial marketing activities is a large training component in consumer-based service delivery and contraceptive technology.	Futures Group
<b>Medical Partnerships:</b> USAID promotes a medical partnership between the University of Kansas Medical Center and the Kyrgyzstan Institute of Oncology and Radiology. The program utilizes the practical expertise from US health care providers to a) close the health care knowledge gap through exchange with US partners; b) improve the productivity of health providers through management training; and c) affect large-scale change from the bottom up by disseminating successes of partnership demonstration projects.	American International Health Alliance (AIHA)
<b>Epidemiology and Health Surveillance:</b> USAID provides technical assistance and training in order to develop and refine the modern health surveillance capacity of Kyrgyzstan.	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
<b>Vaccine Support:</b> USAID is working to establish vaccine security as a means to ensure that immunization from basic diseases will be cost-effective and efficient. This continues work focused on reforming the Immunization Schedule policies.	John Snow, Inc./BASICS
<b>Central Asia Infectious Disease Program (CAIDP):</b> USAID is working to reduce children morbidity and mortality caused by acute respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases.	Center for Disease Control(CDC),BASICS
<b>Reproductive Health Services Expansion Program:</b> USAID provides technical assistance and training to modernize, expand and improve the quality and sustainability of reproductive health services. Under this component, USAID is providing technical assistance and funding for the Kyrgyzstan Demographic and Health Survey.	Macro International, JHPIEGO, AVSC

## Human Resources Development

<b>NIS Education and Training(NET) Project:</b> USAID provides U.S. based training for mid-to-senior level Kyrgyz leaders and professionals in areas directly relevant to the transition to democracy and a free-market economy. Training is provided through short-term training courses in the United States, in addition to a follow-on training program back in Kyrgyzstan. Returnees have access to an alumni center equipped with reference and communications equipment. To date, more than 630 Kyrgyz participants had been sent to the U.S. for training under the NET training program.	Academy for Educational Development (AED)
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## UZBEKISTAN

**Uzbekistan Program Overview**  
**U.S. Agency for International Development Regional Mission for Central Asia**  
**USAID/CAR**  
**November 15, 1996**

**Strategic Assistance Area 1 - Market Transition:** “Foster the emergence of a competitive, market-oriented economy in which the majority of the economic resources are privately owned and managed.”

<b>1.2 Increased soundness of fiscal policies and fiscal management practices</b>	
<b>Fiscal Reform:</b> USAID consultants assist the State Tax Committee and the Ministry of Finance in fiscal policy reform. This includes a revision of the country’s tax codes and the government’s budgeting system.	KPMG/Barents Group
<b>1.3 Improved, more sustainable private business operations</b>	
<b>Investment Capital:</b> The USAID-funded Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund, which is based in Tashkent, provides loans to small and medium sized private enterprises and takes equity positions in private companies. The fund also provides financing to Uzbek-American joint ventures.	Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund
<b>Trade and Investment:</b> USAID will provide long and short term technical advisors and training to assist the Government of Uzbekistan accede to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Assistance will also focus on revision of the legal and regulatory framework in such crucial areas as customs and the protection of intellectual property and other areas which may not be in compliance with WTO regulations.	Booze, Allen and Hamilton
<b>Private Enterprise Development:</b> USAID provides technical, managerial and business-planning assistance to private and privatizing enterprises through American retired business executives, as well as ongoing business development assistance through field staff. This project works closely with the CAAEF to help enterprises access and use financing.	International Executive Service Corps
<b>Small-Scale Private Agriculture Development:</b> USAID supports private farmers and agribusinesses in planning, managing, financing, marketing and distribution of their production.	Winrock International
<b>1.4 A competitive private financial sector that is more responsive to the needs of a market-oriented economy</b>	
<b>Bankers Training:</b> The USAID Bankers Training Project, based in Almaty, is conducting a Bank Supervision Training Program for the staff of the Central Bank of Uzbekistan in Tashkent.	KPMG
<b>Pension Reform:</b> This project focuses on the reform of the country’s social security system and the development of private pensions through the introduction of a private pension law .	DAI

## REGIONAL PROGRAM:

**Strategic Assistance Area 1 - Regional Energy and Environmental Transitions:** “Support the development of national and regional energy and water resource policies and practices which foster international trade and investment, reduce regional tensions, and increase social stability and environmental sustainability.”

<b>1.5 An effective policy framework in place to achieve private investment in an environmentally sound, regionally efficient, market oriented energy sector</b>	
<b>Energy Contracting and Power Pooling:</b> USAID promotes the integrated development and economically efficient operation of regional electric power systems through international contracts and the creation of a competitive power market by assisting regional energy organizations and the Ministries of Energy, Coal and gas; Water Resources Management bodies; and other government agencies in each country.	Hagler Bailly, IRG, CH2M-Hill, HIID, Burns and Roe, U.S. Energy Association, NET
<b>Water Policy:</b> USAID supports region-wide cooperation in sustainable water management through the development of international treaties, agreements and protocols dealing with water pricing, sharing, quality, and cost recovery for irrigation, urban, industrial, and energy generation use.	IRG, CH2M-Hill, HIID, Hagler Bailly
<b>Oil and Gas Activities:</b> USAID assists the Ministries of Oil and Gas and the state energy companies in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the development of implementing rules and regulations concerning petroleum operations, pipeline tariff reform, sector privatization and in attracting foreign investment. It also assists in the training of the ministry staff involved in international operations and negotiations.	Hagler Bailly, HIID, and NET
<b>Energy Led Economic Growth:</b> USAID assists the traditional policy making branches of the governments of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in their assessments and decisions on macroeconomic issues associated with economic growth and investment for resource-based economies. The goal of such assistance is to direct income into sectors such as education, environmental protection, market reform etc. which lead to long-term social and economic stability.	HIID and Hagler Bailly
<b>3.3 Reduced environmental risks to public health</b>	
<b>U.S. Aral Sea Program:</b> The USAID funded program to improve the sustainability of the Sari-Bulak main water transmission system, and the Kosaman and Berdykol water well fields in Kyzyl Orda Oblast, is in its final stage of implementation. USAID also provides expertise and training to public health and water management organizations operating in the same area. Kazakhstan also participates in the USAID funded region-wide cooperation in water management program.	CH2M-Hill and HIID
<b>Urban and Industrial Pollution:</b> USAID promotes the use of market based mechanisms of pollution control, more efficient use of natural resources and the inclusion of environmental concerns in the privatization process in both government and the private sector. USAID also provides assistance for drafting a new national environmental protection law; implementing rules and regulations for water pricing; and a law providing for the formation of agricultural water user associations. A USAID program for reducing pollution emissions at selected heavy industries in the Irtysh River Basin is entering its final stages of implementation.	Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), World Environmental Council (WEC)

**Strategic Assistance Area 2 - Democratic Transition:** “Support the transition to transparent and accountable governance and the empowerment of citizens through democratic political processes.”

<b>2.1 Increased, better-informed citizens’ participation in political and economic decision-making</b>	
<b>Non-governmental Organizations:</b> USAID supports empowering NGOs in all strategic areas (democratic, market and social transition), with increased attention to leadership and coalition-building, as well as improvements in the legal and regulatory framework affecting NGOs.	American Legal Consortium, Counterpart Consortium, ISAR, Eurasia Foundation
<b>Civic Education:</b> USAID funds IFES to conduct a national public opinion survey, hoping the results will help communities develop civic education programs and for the government to improve its electoral system. The results may provide the basis for the "Strategies for Citizen Involvement" seminar series.	IFES
<b>Independent Media:</b> USAID provides technical assistance to non-governmental television and related radio stations. Activities include seminars and training manuals on beginning television management, advertising sales, television computer graphics, radio management and radio journalism. This project also works to develop regional and national independent television networks.	Internews
<b>Legal Reform:</b> USAID continues support for the government and the parliament in the development of a system of laws including laws governing small business, labor law and the criminal, civil and banking codes. USAID also supports the development of an independent judiciary and the legal profession through continuing legal education.	ABA/CEELI

**Strategic Assistance Area 3 - Social Sector Transition:** “Respond to the humanitarian crises and strengthen the capacity to manage the human dimension of the transition to democracy.”

<b>3.2 Improved sustainability of social benefits and services</b>	
<b>Medical Partnerships:</b> USAID promotes a medical partnership between Tashkent State Medical Institution No. 2 and the University of Illinois at Chicago Teaching Hospital. The program utilizes the practical expertise from US health providers to a) close the health care knowledge gap through exchange with U.S. partners; b) improve the productivity of health providers through management training; and c) affect large-scale change from the bottom up by disseminating successes of partnership demonstration projects	American International Health Alliance, Counterpart Consortium
<b>Social Marketing of Contraceptives:</b> USAID promotes and directly supports the development of a commercial market for pharmaceutical products in general and specifically modern contraceptives. Included with commercial marketing activities is a large training component in consumer-based service delivery and contraceptive technology.	Futures Group
<b>Epidemiology and Health Surveillance:</b> USAID provides technical assistance and training in order to develop and refine the modern health surveillance capacity of Uzbekistan.	Centers for Disease Control
<b>Vaccine Support:</b> USAID encourages the establishment of vaccine security as a means to ensure that immunization from basic diseases will be cost-effective and efficient. This continues work focused on reforming the Immunization Schedule policies. The BASICS Project has provided intermittent technical assistance in the area of immunization/vaccine/cold chain management.	John Snow, Inc.
<b>Reproductive Health Services Expansion Program:</b> USAID provides technical assistance and training to modernize, expand and improve the quality and sustainability of family health services. Under this project, USAID also provides technical assistance and funding for the Uzbekistan Demographic and Health Survey.	Macro International, JHPIEGO, AVSC

## Human Resources Development

<b>NIS Education and Training Project (NET):</b> Uzbek citizens from both the government and private sector are being sent to the United States under the NIS Exchanges and Training Program for specially designed courses in such subjects as judicial reform, tax policy, water quality standards, business environment, epidemiology, management of welfare systems. Nearly 300 people have been sent to the U.S. An alumni center has been established to provide resources to returned trainees and follow-on activities involving returned participants, training providers, USAID contractors and others are being planned and implemented to multiply the impact of the training.	Academy for Educational Development (AED)
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## ATTACHMENT F

### THE PROBLEM OF HEALTH IN CENTRAL ASIA <sup>36</sup>

#### I. Introduction

In preserving the health gains of the Soviet period, the Central Asian countries face significant demographic and epidemiological challenges, in the context of worsening economic constraints. National income has declined across the region since 1990, and on the order of 50 percent or more in several countries. Economic distress and rising poverty at the household level has been associated with worsening morbidity and mortality. Real health spending per person has declined by more than 50 percent in every country except Uzbekistan, where it has declined by one-third. The result of this scenario is deterioration in many maternal and child health indicators: maternal mortality is increasing in some countries, and micronutrient deficiencies (especially iron and iodine) effect huge numbers of the population.

Yet the extensive and inefficient health infrastructures of the past remain largely intact. The quantities of inputs--in terms of numbers of doctors, beds and hospital admissions--are still above the levels in western industrial countries, although they provide poor value for the monies spent and are not affordable under the current economic circumstances. Public and environmental health programs are not well targeted to the disease burdens. The strengths of the old system in terms of equity and universal access are being threatened by the deterioration of the health infrastructure and shortages of supplies, as well as increasing out-of-pocket payments that adversely affect the poor--and may disproportionately affect women. Pharmaceutical procurement, distribution, pricing, rational use, and quality are major problems across Central Asia.

Under serious budget and institutional constraints, the governments of Central Asia are facing a major challenge in meeting the health needs of their populations. The extensive and inefficient systems of the past are no longer affordable and require fundamental restructuring. At the same time, there is an urgent need to tackle the declining health status of the population.

#### II. Women's Major Health-related Problems and Constraints

In some respects, women's health may be deteriorating since the transition to a market economy. The breakdown of the centralized health care system, lack of pharmaceuticals, and rising environmental contamination result in declining health care for women and families. Where once primary health care was one of Kazakhstan's proud achievements, it is now one of the casualties of high speed economic

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<sup>36</sup>

Adapted from "A Survey of Health Reform in Central Asia" by Klugman, J.; G. Schieber with the assistance of T. Heleniak and V. Hon. 1996: The World Bank.

adjustment. Rising rates of maternal mortality may be just one of the outcomes of such a complex set of issues.

Women and children are priorities, in part, because the population is young. One third to one half of the population is under 15 years of age, and one fifth are women of child bearing age.

According to UNICEF<sup>37</sup>:

- Maternal mortality ranges between 63 to 114 per 10,000 live births despite almost universal hospital deliveries.
- Iron deficiency in mothers reaches as high as 80%.
- Iodization of salt has almost stopped since the break-up of the Soviet Union.
- Few mothers breast-feed children exclusively for a long enough period after birth.
- The incidence of premature births has increased in the last 3 years and accounts for about 60% of perinatal deaths.
- Infant mortality ranges from 28 to 47 deaths per 1,000 live births, far higher than present level of care warrants.
- Perinatal complications are responsible for 30% of infant deaths in Kzyl Orda Oblast.
- 7 to 12% of newborns are considered underweight.
- The incidence of premature births has increased in the last 3 years and contribute to about 60% of perinatal deaths.
- There is a growing shortage of essential drugs.
- Significant outbreaks of diphtheria, polio and measles have been reported since 1992.

### **III. Health Issues in Kazakstan**

#### **A. Background and Nature of the Problem**

According to the 1995 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)<sup>38</sup>, the major population, health, and nutrition problems faced by the women of Kazakstan include high maternal mortality levels, exceedingly high levels of anemia, and suboptimal breast-feeding practices. Since the transition to democracy, fertility has been decreasing, and reliance on induced abortion as a primary means of family planning has been changing to greater use of modern contraception. The following table presents the most important indicators, which are further delineated in the subsequent material.

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<sup>37</sup> UNICEF Area Coordinating Office for the Central Asian Republics: ASPERA: Protecting Children and Women in the Aral Sea Disaster Zone. March, 1996.

<sup>38</sup> Macro International: Kazakstan Demographic and Health Survey, 1995. Calverton, Maryland, 1996.

## World Summit for Children Indicators: Kazakhstan 1995

BASIC INDICATORS		Value
Childhood mortality	Infant mortality rate	40 per 1,000
	Under-five mortality rate	46 per 1,000
Maternal mortality	Maternal mortality ratio	77 per 100,000 <sup>39</sup>
Childhood undernutrition	Percent stunted (of children under 3 years)	15.8
	Percent wasted (of children under 3 years)	3.3
	Percent underweight (of children under 3 years)	8.3
Clean water supply	Percent of households within 15 minutes of a safe water supply <sup>40</sup>	86.6
Sanitary excreta disposal	Percent of households with flush toilets or VIP latrines	42.6
Basic education	Percent of women 15-49 with completed primary education	98.6
	Percent of men 15-49 with completed primary education	98.8
	Percent of girls 6-12 attending school	81.3
	Percent of boys 6-12 attending school	80.4
	Percent of women 15-49 who are literate	99.8
Children in especially difficult situations	Percent of children who are orphans (both parents dead)	0.1
	Percent of children who do not live with their natural mother	8.1
	Percent of children who live in single adult households	4.1
SUPPORTING INDICATORS		
Birth spacing	Percent of births within 24 months of a previous birth <sup>41</sup>	34.3
Safe motherhood	Percent of births with medical prenatal care	92.5
	Percent of births with prenatal care in first trimester	58.9
	Percent of births with medical assistance at delivery	99.6
	Percent of births in a medical facility	98.4
	Percent of births at high risk	38.7
Family planning	Contraceptive prevalence rate (any method, married women)	59.1
	Percent of currently married women with an unmet demand for family planning	15.7
	Percent of currently married women with an unmet need for family planning to avoid a high-risk birth	12.5
Nutrition		
Maternal nutrition	Percent of mothers with low BMI	7.9
Low birth weight	Percent of births at low birth weight (of those reporting numeric weight)	9.1
Breastfeeding	Percent of children under 4 months who are exclusively	12.0
Iodine	Percent of households with iodized salt	52.9
Child Health		
Diarrhea control	Percent of children with diarrhea in preceding 2 weeks who received oral rehydration therapy (sugar-salt-water solution)	41.2
Acute respiratory infection	Percent of children with acute respiratory infection in preceding 2 weeks who were seen by medical personnel	47.7

## 1. Maternal Mortality

39

Data from the GOK Ministry of Health.

40

Piped, well, and bottled water.

41

First births are excluded.

The level of maternal mortality in Kazakhstan has not improved during the last 5 years, partly because of declining investment in the health sector. The maternal mortality rate (MMR) has increased from 60 per 100,000 live births in 1989 to 63 in 1993<sup>42</sup>; the Ministry of Health cites the figure at 77 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. (See following table.) In 1993, the three main causes of maternal deaths were toxemia, hemorrhage, and abortions, each accounting for more than 15 percent of total maternal mortality.

## 2. Anemia

Using the Hemocue system, the 1995 DHS tested hemoglobin values for women and children included in this nationally-representative sample (3771 women aged 15-49 years)<sup>43</sup>. The DHS found:

*Approximately half (49 percent) of the women in Kazakhstan suffer from some degree of anemia. Thirty-seven percent of these women have mild anemia, 11 percent have moderate anemia, and 1 percent are severely anemic...The highest overall rate of anemia (59 percent) is found in the West Region while Almaty City has the lowest overall rate (38 percent). With respect to ethnicity, the rate of anemia is higher among ethnic Kayak women (57 percent) than among ethnic Russian women (42 percent) and women of other ethnic groups (43 percent). (p. xiv)*

## 3. Iodine Deficiency

Iodine deficiency is endemic in many parts of Central Asia. In Kazakhstan, the more seriously affected regions are in the South-east and East (67% goiter) and the North (25% goiter). Former programs for the iodation of salt are currently suspended and iodine deficiency disorders has returned in full force<sup>44</sup>. Resultant cretinism and effect on IQ will continue to escalate unless this problem is addressed.

## 4. Breast-feeding Practices

The 1995 DHS found that breast-feeding is almost universally initiated and (on average) continued for the first 14 months of the child's life. However, exclusive breast-feeding (as recommended by WHO) is practiced for less than two weeks following delivery.

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<sup>42</sup> WHO, 1996.

<sup>43</sup> The Hemocue system tests only hemoglobin values. Low hemoglobin values measure the end-stages of anemia, and are not specific in identifying the type of anemia that is present. Environmental toxins, such as lead, may lead to low hemoglobin values. Nutritional deficiencies other than iron also result in depressed hemoglobin values.

<sup>44</sup> The International Conference on 'National Nutrition Policies for Kazakhstan in the Context of Primary Health Care,' Almaty, March, 1996. Nutrition Action Plan for Kazakhstan.



This has important implications for (1) child morbidity and mortality, especially in light of the high levels of acute respiratory infection in children, and (2) women's health status, as exclusive breast-feeding delays the return of menses and results in decreased iron losses during the first six months postpartum, and has also been correlated with lower levels of cancers of the breast and uterus.

## **5. Fertility Level, Induced Abortion, and Modern Contraception**

The 1995 DHS found that fertility levels were decreasing. The total fertility rate for all of Kazakhstan is 2.5 children per woman, is lowest (1.5) for women in Almaty City, and highest in the South Region (3.4). Kazakh women have nearly double the fertility levels as Russian women. The TFR has declined from 2.9 to 2.5 since 1989.

As in other areas of the former Soviet Union, induced abortion was once a primary means of fertility control. The 1995 DHS indicate a 20 percent decline in the general abortion rate between the periods of 1986-90 and 1993-95. These figures indicate that women in Kazakhstan will elect to have an average of nearly two abortions over their lifetimes.

The rising use of modern contraception (59 percent of currently married women report that they are currently using a contraceptive method) is replacing abortion as a primary means of family planning. Over an interval of about 5 years, the pill and use of IUDs increased by 32 percent, while the rate of induced abortion fell significantly during this time period<sup>45</sup>.

### **B. Kazakhstan's Health Care System**

The health system is well-developed but managed by top-down approaches, is under funded but amply staffed, and has the highest density of providers in the world. These providers need in-service education to update their professional knowledge and management skills and to develop approaches to improve the efficiency of the health system. Most health institutions have electricity and partial heating but many lack running water and rudimentary sanitation. There is an acute shortage of essential vaccines, drugs, and supplies. Rooming-in has been introduced recently in maternity wards but rigidly scheduled breast-feeding intervals are still the rule. Baby formula is introduced early sometimes locally produced and of crude quality, at other times supplied from abroad as 'emergency assistance.'

As in other parts of the former Soviet Union, social benefits to women and children were extensive. Women were allowed generous maternity leave, could legally retire 5 years earlier than men, and children were granted a child allowance. Furthermore,

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<sup>45</sup>

DHS, 1996.

child care centers were state-supported, allowing women to be actively engaged in the labor force.

This costly system of social support has been dismantled, and women often bear the brunt of lack of services. Seventy percent of child care centers have closed. Jobs in the newly-established private sector that have been created by foreign companies often offer no social benefits. Faced with this scenario, women's concerns often focus on daily survival for their families.

#### **IV. Role of Other Donors**

##### **A. World Health Organization (WHO/EURO) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

A five-year, six-country effort promote maternal and child health and family planning in the region (the CARAK Project) through district-level interventions has begun. Project activities include working with local professional and consumers to revise health policies, legislation, and procedures, train health personnel, revise primary and secondary school and university curricula, provide public media messages on MCH/FP, and develop training sites for project implementation. The Project has been launched in twelve districts in the six countries for a total of 12 hospitals, 36 health centers and 12 feldscher/midwifery stations.

The goals of the Project include:

- Reduction of maternal, perinatal, and neonatal mortality by 30%
- Practice of abortions decreased by 50%
- Use of modern contraceptives increased by 50%
- Breast-feeding at four months increased by 25%
- Nutritional anemia decreased by 10%

Activities include a focus on:

- Legislation, policies, procedures and ethical practice guidelines
- Training packages for medical practitioners
- Network of urban and rural pilot areas
- Trained health personnel
- Information system on nutrition, health, and population indicators
- Public media messages implemented through focused groups
- Revised primary and secondary school and university health curricula

The CARAK Project had its first coordinators meeting in Tashkent in November, 1995, and first project reports in December, 1996. Data have largely reinforced the trends noted in the DHS. No other preliminary results of intervention efforts were available at the time of visit of the Assessment Team.

##### **B. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**

UNICEF's activities include a focus on the Aral Sea Project for Environmental and Regional Assistance (ASPERA). A total of US\$8,582,000 has been requested from donors to support programmatic activities, which include a comprehensive intervention package of vaccines, cold chain equipment, management, programs to address micronutrient deficiencies (iron and iodine), and breast-feeding promotion.

### **C. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

To date, the Federation's work focuses largely on supplementary food and limited medical assistance to infants.

### **V. USAID's Objectives**

The Mission addresses the health sector through SO 3.2, "Reform Strategies in Selected Social Sectors Developed and Implemented." Three intermediary results are included:

- Critical social benefits and services needs identified for vulnerable populations
- Demonstration that quality health care and municipal services can be made available on a cost effective basis
- Increased participation by other donors

The major emphasis of USAID/CARS's program under this Strategic Objective is to develop and implement reform oriented strategies in the health and housing sector. This is done by demonstrating that quality health care can be made available on a cost effective basis, by identifying the needs of the vulnerable populations and developing appropriate pilot projects and finally by leveraging support from the broader donor community. USAID/CAR supports NGO initiatives to provide sustainable social sector services and assists with adjusting and targeting housing, health and pension subsidies to address the needs of vulnerable groups while structural changes are occurring.